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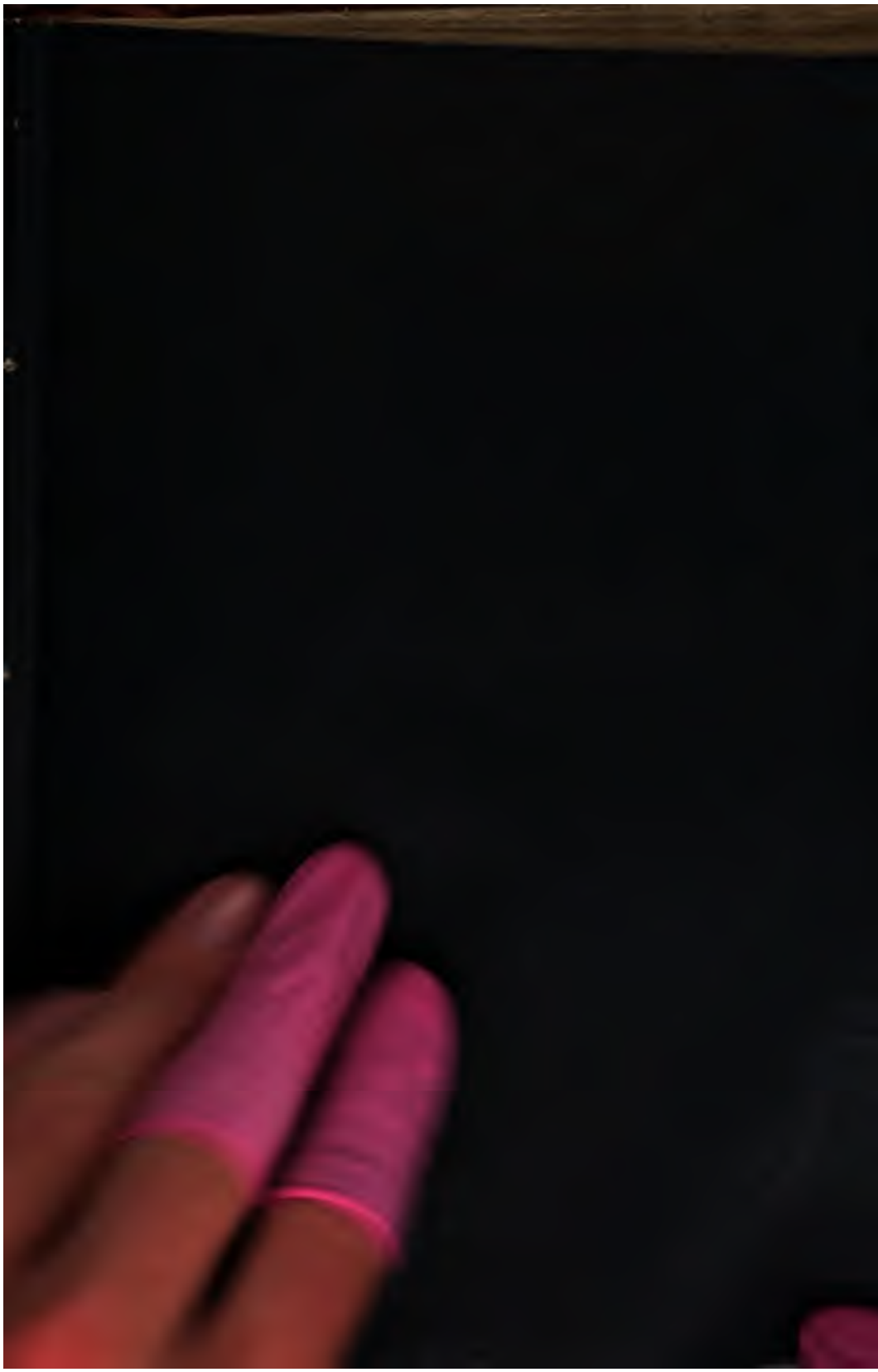

OUTLINES OF COSMIC PHILOSOPHY.

VOLUME II.

OUTLINES

OF

COSMIC PHILOSOPHY,

BASED ON THE

DOCTRINE OF EVOLUTION,

WITH

CRITICISMS ON THE POSITIVE PHILOSOPHY.

BY

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AT HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

"*L'univers, pour qui saurait l'embrasser d'un seul point de vue, ne serait, s'il est permis de le dire, qu'un fait unique et une grande vérité.*"—D'ALEMBERT.

"Καὶ τὸ ὅλον τοῦτο διὰ ταῦτα Κόσμον καλοῦσιν, οὐκ ἀκοσμίαν."—PLATO.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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PART II.

SYNTHESIS.

(CONTINUED.)

"Die Thätigkeit des Organismus ist bestimmt durch seine Receptivität und umgekehrt. Weder seine Thätigkeit noch seine Receptivität ist an sich etwas reelles, Realität erlangen beide nur in dieser Wechselbestimmung. Thätigkeit und Receptivität entstehen also zugleich in einem und demselben untheilbaren Moment, und nur dieses Simultaneität von Thätigkeit und Receptivität constituirt das Leben. In den entgegengesetzten Richtungen, die durch diese Entgegensetzung entstehen, liegt das Princip für die Construction aller Lebenserscheinungen."—SCHELLING, *Erster Entwurf.* 1799.

CHAPTER X.

NATURAL SELECTION.

In that most delightful of printed books, the "Conversations of Goethe with Eckermann and Soret," there is an amusing anecdote which shows how distinctly the great master realized the importance of the question of the origin of species. The news of the French Revolution of July, 1830, had just reached Weimar and set the whole town in commotion. In the course of the afternoon, says Soret, "I went around to Goethe's. 'Now,' exclaimed he to me, as I entered, 'what do you think of this great event? The volcano has come to an eruption; everything is in flames, and we have no longer a transaction with closed doors!' 'Terrible affair,' said I, 'but what could be expected under such outrageous circumstances, and with such a ministry, otherwise than that the whole would end with the expulsion of the royal family?' 'My good friend,' gravely returned Goethe, 'we seem not to understand each other. I am not speaking of those creatures there, but of something quite different. I am speaking of the contest, so important for science, between Cuvier and Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, which has just come to an open rupture in the French Academy!'" At this unexpected turn of the subject poor Soret knew not what to say,

and for some minutes, he tells us, his thoughts were quite at a standstill.

The anecdote well illustrates the immeasurable superiority of Goethe over Comte in prophetic insight into the bearings of the chief scientific question of the immediate future. While Comte was superciliously setting aside the problem of man's origin, as a problem not only insoluble but utterly devoid of philosophic value even if it could be solved, the great German poet and philosopher was welcoming the outbreak of this famous contest on questions of pure morphology, as conducive to the speedy triumph of the development theory, for which he himself had so long been waging battle. But events were hastening that triumph even more rapidly than Goethe could have anticipated. In December 1831, only a few weeks before Goethe was laid in the grave, Mr. Darwin set out upon that voyage around the world, in the course of which he fell in with the facts which suggested his theory of the origin of species. The history of the investigation is a memorable one,—worth noting for the illustration it gives of the habits of a truly scientific mind. On his return to England, in 1837, Mr. Darwin began patiently to collect all kinds of facts which might be of use in the solution of the problem,—"how is organic evolution caused?" It was only after seven years of unremitting labour that he went so far as to commit to manuscript a brief sketch of his general conclusions, of which the main points were communicated to his friends Sir Charles Lyell and Dr. Hooker. A less wise and sober speculator than Mr. Darwin would now at once have rushed into print. A thinker less thoroughly imbued with the true scientific spirit would probably have suffered from not publishing his views, and profiting by the adverse criticisms of contemporary observers. It is a striking illustration of Mr. Darwin's patience and self-restraint that he continued fifteen years longer to work assiduously in testing the weak and strong points of his theory, before presenting

it to the public. And it is an equally interesting illustration of his thoroughly scientific temperament that, after so many years of solitary labour, he should have been so little carried away by the fascinations of his own hypothesis as to foresee clearly all the more valid objections which might be urged against it. After a careful perusal of the recent literature of the subject, and especially of the skilful work of Mr. St. George Mivart, it still seems to me that the weightiest objections which have yet been brought to bear on the Darwinian theory are to be found in Chapters VI.—IX. of Mr. Darwin's own work, where they are elaborately and in most cases conclusively answered. To such a marvellous instance of candour, patience, and sobriety, united with the utmost boldness of speculation, the history of science can show but few parallels.

In 1858, a fortunate circumstance caused Mr. Darwin to break his long silence, and to give to the public an exposition of the results of his researches. Mr. Wallace, who had been for several years engaged in studying the natural history of the Malay Archipelago, had arrived at views concerning the origin of species quite similar to Mr. Darwin's, and in 1858 he sent Mr. Darwin an essay on the subject, which in August of the same year was published in the Journal of the Linnæan Society. Sir Charles Lyell and Dr. Hooker now earnestly advised Mr. Darwin to publish his own views; and in 1859 the memorable treatise on the "Origin of Species" was given to the world.

It would, however, be incorrect to rate Mr. Wallace's merits, in the discovery of the law of natural selection, so high as Mr. Darwin's. They do not stand on precisely the same level, like Adams and Leverrier with reference to the discovery of the planet Neptune. Mr. Wallace, indeed, thought out independently all the essential points of the theory, and stated it in a way which showed that he understood its wide-reaching importance; but being a much younger man

than Mr. Darwin, and having begun the investigation at a much later date, he by no means worked it out so elaborately. Nor is it likely that, with an equal length of time at his command, he could have succeeded in producing a work comparable in scientific calibre to the "Origin of Species." His lately published collection of essays, while showing unusual powers of observation and rare acuteness in the application of his theory to certain special classes of phenomena, nevertheless furnishes convincing proof that in breadth and depth of scientific attainment, as well as in philosophic capacity, he is very far inferior to his great coadjutor. In his preface, indeed, Mr. Wallace hastens to acknowledge, with a modest self-appreciation as rare as it is admirable, and especially rare in such cases, that his strength would have been quite unequal to the task which Mr. Darwin has accomplished.

As Prof. Haeckel somewhere observes, it was quite fortunate for the progress of science that Mr. Darwin received such a stimulus to the publication of his theory; since otherwise he might perhaps have gone on several years longer, observing and experimenting in seclusion. The almost immediate acquiescence of the majority of naturalists in Mr. Darwin's views, shows that in 1859 the scientific world was fully prepared for them. The flimsiness of the special-creation hypothesis was more or less clearly perceived by a large number of biologists, who were only withheld from committing themselves to the derivation theory by the circumstance that no satisfactory explanation of the *process* of development had been propounded. No one had assigned an adequate cause for such a phenomenon as the gradual evolution of a new species; and sundry attempts which had been made in this direction were so obviously futile as to excite both distrust and ridicule. Lamarck, for example, placing an exaggerated stress upon an established law of biology, contended that "desires, by leading to increased

actions of motor organs, may induce further development of such organs," and that, consequently, animals may become directly adapted through structural changes to changes in their environment. We shall see, as we continue the discussion, that such directly adaptive changes really take place; but Lamarck ill understood their character, and indeed could not have been expected to understand it, since in his day dynamical biology was in its earliest infancy.[1] By insisting on volition as a chief cause of adaptive change, the illustrious naturalist not only left the causes of vegetable variation unexplained, but even in the zoological department laid open the way for malicious misrepresentations which the uninstructed zeal of theological adversaries has gladly transferred to the account of Mr. Darwin. Some time ago a clergyman in New York, lecturing about Darwinism, sarcastically alluded to "the bear which took to swimming, and so became a whale." Had this worthy person condescended to study the subject about which he thought himself fit to enlighten the public, he would soon have discovered that his funny remark is not even a parody upon any opinion held by Mr. Darwin. In so far as it is applicable to any opinion ever held by a scientific writer, it may perhaps be accepted as a parody, though at best a very far-fetched and feeble one, of the hypothesis of Lamarck.

It is now time to explain what the Darwinian theory is. At the outset we may observe that while it is a common error to speak of Mr. Darwin as if he were the originator of the derivation theory, the opposite error is not unfrequently committed of alluding to him as if he had contributed nothing to the establishment of that theory save the doctrine of natural selection. Mr. Mivart habitually thus alludes to him. In fact, however, Mr. Darwin's merits are twofold. He was the first to marshal the arguments from classification,

[1] Lamarck also tried to explain organic development metaphysically, as the continuous manifestation of an "inherent tendency" toward perfection.

embryology, morphology, and distribution, and thus fairly to establish the fact that there has been a derivation of higher forms from lower; and he was also the first to point out the *modus operandi* of the change. The first of these achievements by itself would have entitled him to associate his name with the development theory; though it was only by the second that the triumph of the theory was practically assured. Just as, in astronomy, the heliocentric theory was not regarded as completely established until the forces which it postulated were explained as identical with forces already known, so the development theory possessed comparatively little value as a working hypothesis so long as it still remained doubtful whether there were any known or knowable causes sufficient to have brought about the phenomena which that theory assumed to have taken place. It was by pointing out adequate causes of organic evolution that Mr. Darwin established the development theory upon a thoroughly scientific basis.

As Lyell explained all past geologic phenomena as due to the slow action of the same forces which are still in action over the earth's surface and beneath its crust, so Mr. Darwin, in explaining the evolution of higher from lower forms of life, appeals only to agencies which are still visibly in action. Whether species, in a state of nature, are changing or not at the present time, cannot be determined by direct observation, any more than the motion of the hour-hand of a clock could be detected by gazing at it for one second.[1] The entire period

[1] "If we imagine mankind to be contemplated by some creature as short-lived as an ephemeron, but possessing intelligence like our own—if we imagine such a being studying men and women, during his few hours of life, and speculating as to the mode in which they came into existence; it is manifest that, reasoning in the usual way, he would suppose each man and woman to have been separately created. No appreciable changes of structure occurring during the few hours over which his observations extended, this being would probably infer that no changes of structure were taking place, or had taken place; and that from the outset, each man and woman had possessed all the characters then visible—had been originally formed with them. This would naturally be the first impression."—Spencer, *Principles of Biology*, vol. i. p. 338.

which has elapsed since men began to observe nature systematically, is but an infinitesimal portion of the period requisite for any fundamental alteration in the characteristics of a species. But there are innumerable cases in which species are made to change rapidly through the deliberate intervention of man. In the course of a few thousand years, a great number of varieties of plants and animals have been produced under domestication, many of which differ so widely from their parent-forms that, if found in a state of nature, they would be unhesitatingly classified as distinct species, and sometimes as distinct genera. Modifications in the specific characters of domesticated organisms are the only ones which take place so rapidly that we can actually observe them; and it therefore becomes highly important to inquire what is the agency which produces these modifications.

That agency is neither more nor less than *selection*, taking advantage of that slight but universal variation in organisms implied by the fact that no two individuals in any species are exactly alike. If man, for example, wishes to produce a breed of fleet race-horses, he has only to take a score of horses and select from these the fleetest to pair together: from among the offspring of these fleet pairs he must again select the fleetest; and thus, in a few generations, he will obtain horses whose average speed far exceeds that of the fleetest of their undomesticated ancestors. It is in this and no other way that our breeds of race-horses have been produced. In this way too have been produced the fine wools of which our clothing is made. By selecting, generation after generation, the sheep with the finest and longest wool, a breed of sheep is ultimately reared with wool almost generically different from that of the undomesticated race. In this and no other way have the different races of dogs—the greyhound, the mastiff, the terrier, the pointer, and the white-haired Eskimo—been artificially developed from two or three closely allied varieties of the wolf and jackal. The mastiff and

blood-hound are more than ten times as large as the terrier, and, if found in a state of nature, they would perhaps be classed in distinct genera, like the leopard and panther, whose differences are hardly more striking. Yet the ancestral races from which these dogs have been reared differed but slightly from each other. The different breeds of dogs vary in the number of their toes, teeth, and vertebræ, in the number and disposition of their mammæ, in the shape of their zygomatic arches, and in the position of their occiputs; although dogs have not been selected with reference to these peculiarities, about which uninstructed men neither know nor care, but only with reference to their speed, fleetness, strength, or sagacity. In the case of domestic pigeons, where man has been to a great extent actuated by pure fancy in his selections, the divergences are still more remarkable. All domestic pigeons are descended from a single species of wild pigeon; yet their differences, even in bony structure, in the internal organs, and in mental disposition, are such as characterize distinct genera, and to describe them completely would require a large volume. Pigs, rabbits, cows, fowl, silk-moths, and hive-bees furnish no less instructive evidence; and the development of the peach and the almond from a common stock, and of countless varieties of apple from the sour crab, may be cited, out of a hundred examples, to show what prodigies artificial selection has accomplished in the modification of vegetal organisms.

Now Mr. Darwin's great achievement has been to show that a similar process of selection, going on throughout the organic world without the knowledge or intervention of man, tends not only to maintain but to produce adaptive alterations in plants and animals. The process is a simple one, when once we have the clew to it. All plants and animals tend to increase in a high geometrical ratio. The old problem of the nails in the horse's shoe teaches us what an astounding affair is a geometrical rate of in-

crease; but when we consider the reproductive capacity of insects and plants, the nails in the horse's shoe are left nowhere. When Arctic travellers tell us that the minute protococcus multiplies so fast as to colour blood-red many acres of snow in a single night, such a rate of increase appears astonishing. But it is a mere trifle compared to what would happen if reproduction were to go on unchecked. Let us take the case of a plant which yields one hundred seeds yearly, and suppose each of these seeds to reach maturity so as to yield its hundred offspring in the following year: in the tenth year the product would be one hundred quintillions[1] of adult plants! As this is one of those figures before which the imagination stands hopelessly baffled, let us try the effect of an illustration. Supposing each of these plants to be from three to five inches in length, so that about twenty thousand would reach an English mile, the total length of the number just mentioned would be equal to five million times the radius of the earth's orbit. The ray of light, which travels from the sun to the earth in eight minutes, would be seventy-six years in passing along this line of little plants! And in similar wise, it might be shown of many insects, crustaceans, and fishes, that their unchecked reproduction could not long go on without requiring the assimilation of a greater quantity of matter than is contained in the whole solar system.

We may now begin dimly to realize how prodigious is the slaughter which unceasingly goes on throughout the organic world. For obviously, when a plant, like the one just cited, maintains year by year a tolerable uniformity in its numbers, it does so only because on the average ninety-nine seeds perish prematurely for one that survives long enough to produce other seeds. A single codfish has been known to lay six million eggs within a year. If these eggs were all to become adult codfishes, and the multiplication were to

[1] According to the American system of numeration. One hundred thousand trillions, according to the English system.

continue at this rate for three or four years, the ocean would not afford room for the species. Yet we have no reason to suppose that the race of codfishes is actually increasing in numbers to any notable extent. With the codfish, as with animal species in general, the numbers during many successive generations oscillate about a point which is fixed, or moves but slowly forward or backward. Instead of a geometrical increase with a ratio of six millions, there is practically no marked increase at all. Now this implies that out of the six million embryo codfish a sufficient number will survive to replace their two parents, and to replace a certain small proportion of those contemporary codfishes who leave no progeny. Perhaps a dozen may suffice for this, perhaps a hundred. The rest of the six million must die. We may thus understand what is meant by the "struggle for existence." Battles far more deadly than those of Gettysburg or Gravelotte have been incessantly waged on every square mile of the earth's life-bearing surface, since life first began. It is only thus that the enormous increase of each species has been kept within bounds. Of the many offspring produced by each plant and animal, save in the case of those highest in the scale, but few attain maturity and leave offspring behind them. The most perish for want of sustenance, or are slain to furnish food for other organisms. There is thus an unceasing struggle for life—a competition for the means of subsistence—going on among all plants and animals. In this struggle by far the greater number succumb without leaving offspring, but a few favoured ones in each generation survive and propagate to their offspring the qualities by virtue of which they have survived.

Thus we see what is meant by "Natural Selection." The organisms which survive and propagate their kind are those which are best adapted to the conditions in which they live; so that we may, by a legitimate use of metaphor, personify Nature as a mighty breeder, selecting from each generation

those individuals which are fleetest, strongest, most sagacious, lions with supplest muscles, moths with longest antennæ, mollusks with hardest shells, wolves with keenest scent, bees with surest instinct, flowers with sweetest nectar,—until, in the course of untold ages, the numberless varieties of organic life have been produced by the same process of which man now takes advantage in order to produce variations to suit his own caprices.

Between natural selection and selection by man there is, however, one important difference. Selection by man tends to produce varieties adapted to satisfy human necessities or inclinations, and it has no direct reference to the maintenance of the species. Such abnormities as the pouter and tumbler pigeons could not be sustained in a state of nature; and hence, when domesticated animals are turned loose, they are apt to revert to something like their ancestral type,[1] else they are exterminated by races better adapted to wild life. But natural selection, working with the sternest of methods, saves from the general slaughter only those individuals which can best take care of themselves, and thus maintains each species in adaptation to its environment. The wonderful harmonies in the organic world, which a crude philosophy explained as the achievement of creative contrivance, are therefore due to the continued survival of the fittest and the continued slaughter of the less adapted plants and animals.

Now if the geography and meteorology of the earth were ever-constant, if the nature of the soil, the amount of moisture, the density of the atmosphere, and the intensity of solar radiance were everywhere to remain forever unaltered, and if each race of plants and animals were always to remain confined to one limited area, the survival of the fittest would simply maintain unaltered any given aspect of the beings constituting the organic world. All variations on either side

[1] This fact, which has often been alleged by superficial critics as an obstacle to the Darwinian theory, is thus in reality implied by that theory.

of the well-adjusted mean would be incessantly cut off by natural selection, and species would be immutable. It is needless to say that no such state of things has ever existed. Constant change has been the order of things ever since our planet first became fit to support organic life. No part of the earth's surface is now, or ever has been, at rest. Continents are rising and sinking, seas are growing deeper and shallower, soils are constantly altering in chemical composition, rivers are ever changing their beds, solar radiance is ever gaining or losing in intensity, according to the earth's ever-varying position in space, the density and moisture of the air are continually increasing and diminishing, and every species of plant and animal is continually pressing upon the limits of the area within which it is confined. All these changes are going on to-day, and have been going on during millions of ages. Though so slight as to be recognized only by the most careful observation during the period covered by human history, these changes have during longer periods sufficed to submerge every continent and perhaps to make dry land of every sea and ocean on the face of the globe. They have raised mountains like the Andes and the Himalayas at the rate of a few inches per century; they have converted extensive tropical swamps into the desert of Sahara; they have repeatedly covered Europe and North America with glaciers; and they have hidden beneath solid rocks vast treasures of carbon stealthily purloined from the dense atmosphere of an older age.

Since such changes have ever been going on, it follows that organisms have been unable to remain constant and live. A race of animals or plants in which no individuals ever varied would sooner or later inevitably be exterminated, leaving no progeny to fill its place. Observation shows, however, that there is no such race. The members of each species are ever slightly varying, but, so long as the environment remains constant, natural selection prevents the variations from

accumulating on either side of the mean which is most advantageous to the species. When the environment changes, if certain variations on one side of the established mean tend to bring the individuals which manifest them into closer adaptation to the new environment, these individuals will survive in the struggle for life, and thus the average character of the species will be slightly altered. No two bears have just the same amount of hair, no two moths have just the same length of proboscis, no two antelopes are exactly matched in fleetness. Now if increasing cold renders a thicker covering useful to the bear, or if the lengthening of a flower-calyx, due to a slight change in soil or quantity of sunlight, renders a longer proboscis useful to the moth, or if the immigration of a carnivorous animal makes it necessary for antelopes often to run for their lives, then in each generation the thickest-coated bears, the longest-tongued moths, and the fleetest antelopes will survive. Every individual variation in the direction of a heavier coat, a longer sucker, or a structure better adapted for fleeing will give its owner the advantage in the incessant struggle for life, and these peculiarities will be oftenest inherited, while individuals which do not vary, or which vary in the wrong direction, will have to migrate or die.[1]

The student of natural history, who realizes, however dimly, the prodigious complexity of the relations of the various species of animals and plants to each other, will perceive that the amount of variation thus preserved and enhanced must in the course of long ages become enormous. If a grain of sand were each year added to an ant-heap, it would in course of time become as large as Chimborazo. But these changes, directly caused by natural selection, are greatly

[1] It is thus one of the great merits of the theory of natural selection, that it accounts for the phenomena of *extinction* of species,—which formerly could only be accounted for by the gratuitous and utterly indefensible hypothesis of periodical catastrophes or cataclysms.

aided and emphasized by other changes indirectly produced by correlation of growth, and also by what is called the law of use and disuse. By correlation of growth, or internal equilibration, we mean the effect produced upon any part of the organism by change in a related or neighbouring part. Let us suppose that it becomes advantageous to some feline animal, like the ancestor of the lion, to have large and powerful jaws. Since no two of our leonines would have jaws of exactly the same size and strength, natural selection would preserve all the strong-jawed individuals, while the weak-jawed individuals would succumb in the struggle for life. In the course of many generations our race of leonines would possess on the average much larger and stronger jaws than at the period at which we began to consider it. But greater weight of jaw entails increased exertion of the muscles which move the jaw, so that these muscles, receiving more and more blood, will become permanently increased in size and power. The portions of the skull into which the jaw-bones fit will likewise receive an extra strain, and will consequently increase in rate of nutrition and grow to a larger size, so that the shape of the whole head will be altered. This increased weight of the head, and the increasingly violent activity of the muscles which move the jaws, entails a greater strain upon the vertebræ which support the head, and upon the cervical muscles which move it from side to side. The heightened nutrition of these bones and muscles will add to their weight, so that the shoulders and chest will be affected. There will be a tightening of the tendons, and probably a perceptible alteration in the relative lengths of the different bones and muscles throughout the anterior part of the body; and these changes, altering the animal's centre of gravity, will inevitably cause other compensating changes in the rest of the body. The legs, shoulders and haunches will be modified. Alterations in the weights bearing upon the chest will affect the growth of the lungs and the aeration

of the blood. And the stomach, intestines, and various secreting glands will respond to the requirements of all these nutritive changes. While, lastly, such deep-seated variations cannot fail to influence the nervous system of the animal, and to modify somewhat its temperament and its modes of life.

To illustrate the effects of use and disuse, let us reconsider the antelopes, of whom natural selection has so long preserved the swiftest and most quickly frightened individuals that they now rank among the fleetest and most timid of mammals. If all the lions and other swift carnivora of Africa were to become extinct, so that antelopes would no longer have to run for their lives, the slower and less easily alarmed individuals would begin to be preserved in as great numbers as the swifter and more timid ones, so that by and by the average speed and timidity of the race would be diminished. In all this we see merely the effects wrought by unaided natural selection. But it is a fundamental law of biology that functions are maintained at their maximum only through constant exercise. Freed from savage enemies, our antelopes would less frequently use the muscles concerned in running, and would less often exercise the mental faculties concerned in the rapid perception of approaching danger. Inevitably, therefore, they would, after several generations, diminish in speed, and become less alert and less timid. Here we see the effects of what is called the law of use and disuse. But to these we should also have to add the effects of correlation of growth. Decrease in speed, involving decrease in muscular tonicity, and rendering possible the assimilation of less concentrated food, would seriously modify the nutrition of the entire organism. The digestive tract would probably be enlarged, and larger and lazier bodies could not fail to be produced, both by the direct influence of the nutritive processes, and because natural selection would no longer necessitate the slaughter of all clumsy-bodied individuals. Thus in course of time the breed of antelopes

would become so thoroughly altered as to constitute a distinct species from their graceful, swift, and timid ancestors. It is in just these ways that New Zealand birds, freed by insular isolation from the attacks of mammalian enemies, have grown large and clumsy, and have lost the power of flight which their partly-aborted wings show that they once possessed.

By the same kind of illustration we may form a rough notion of the way in which a single species bifurcates into two well-defined species. Suppose a race of ruminants to have been living in Africa before the introduction of carnivora, and suppose that, for sundry reasons, the vitality of the race was but little affected by moderate variations in the sizes of its individuals, so that while some were comparatively light and nimble, others were comparatively large and clumsy. Now introducing upon the scene the common ancestor of the lion and the leopard—by immigration either from Asia or from some other adjacent territory now submerged—let us note some probable features of the complex result. First, as regards the attacked ruminants, it is likely that in course of time the lightest and swiftest individuals, habitually taking refuge in flight, would have greatly increased both in fleetness and in timidity; the largest and most clumsy of the species, unable to save themselves by fleeing, would often be forced to stand and fight for their lives, and would thus ultimately have gained in size, strength, and courage; while those who were neither nimble enough to get out of the way nor strong enough to fight successfully would have all been killed off. And thus, after a while, by perpetual destruction of the means and preservation of the extremes, we should get two kinds of ruminant as different from one another as the antelope which escapes by his fleetness and cautious timidity, and the buffalo which boldly withstands the lion and not unfrequently conquers or repulses him. Secondly, let us observe what must have been going on all the while with the attacking carnivora. The lighter and less

powerful of these would find manifest advantage in crouching amid dense foliage and springing down upon unwary victims passing below. The larger and more powerful individuals would more frequently roam about the open country, attacking the larger ruminants and giving chase to the nimbler ones, and would thus increase in strength and fleetness. And thus there would be initiated such differences of size and habit as characterize the leopard and the lion.

It must be borne in mind that this is a purely hypothetical illustration, which does not pretend to give a complete account of the complex process. I have no idea that the differentiation between antelopes and buffaloes, or between lions and leopards, was accomplished in any such straightforward way as this. But while unduly simplifying the case, the illustration is undoubtedly sound in principle. No doubt the lion is so strong and so swift because only the strongest and swiftest lions have been able to prey at once upon buffaloes and upon antelopes. No doubt the antelope is so swift and so timid because only the swiftest and most quickly-frightened antelopes have been enabled to get away from the lion, and to propagate their kind. And no doubt in the process above described, we get a partial glimpse of some of the essential incidents in the past careers of these races.

All the foregoing illustrations unite in enforcing the conclusion that the direct and indirect effects of natural selection are by no means limited to slight or superficial changes in organisms. The student of physiology well knows that no change, however seemingly trivial, which ensures the survival of the organism in its fierce struggle for existence, can fail in the long run to entail so many other changes as to modify, more or less perceptibly, the entire structure. Even such a slight change as an increased thickness of the woolly coat of a mammal may, by altering the excretory power of the skin, affect the functions of the lungs, liver, and kidneys, and thus indirectly increase or diminish the size of the

animal, which in turn will modify its speed, its muscular development, its mental faculties, and its habits of life.

Having thus briefly indicated the capacity of the theory of natural selection for explaining the most general phenomena of organic variation, let us in conclusion observe how admirably it explains certain special phenomena, which do not otherwise admit of scientific explanation. For evidence of the signal success with which Mr. Darwin has explained such otherwise unaccountable facts as the dimorphism of certain flowers, the existence of neuters or sterile females among bees and ants, the odoriferous glands in mammals, the calcareous shells of mollusks, the heavy carapace of the tortoise, the humps of the camel, the amazingly complicated contrivances through which orchidaceous plants are fertilized by insects, the slave-making instinct of certain ants, the horns of male ruminants, and countless other phenomena; for all this, I must refer to Mr. Darwin's various works. From the mass of phenomena to which the theory of natural selection has been satisfactorily applied, I will only select as an illustration the case of colour, in the animal and vegetal kingdoms.

Until after the publication of Mr. Darwin's speculations, the colours of plants and animals had never been made the subject of careful and philosophical study. So far as any hypothesis was held concerning these phenomena, it was the vaguely conceived hypothesis that they are due to the direct action of such physical conditions as climate, soil, or food. But there are fatal objections to such an explanation. When Dr. Forbes Winslow, in his work on the "Physiological Influence of Light," tells us that "the white colour of animals inhabiting the polar regions is attributable to the absence of intense sunlight," it is an obvious objection that the polar regions are not pre-eminent for darkness. Though within the limits of the arctic circle the sun is below the horizon for six months together, it is none the less for the

other six months above the horizon; and though its slanting rays do not cause excessive heat in the summer, the prolonged glare of light, intensified by reflection from the snow and ice, is described as peculiarly intolerable. The summer ought to tan the polar bears as much as the winter can bleach them. And to this it may be added that the Eskimos and Greenlanders, living under the polar circle, are not bleached. Several other facts, alike incompatible with the direct action of physical agencies, are mentioned by Mr. Wallace. While wild rabbits, for instance, are always tinted grey or brown, the same rabbits, when domesticated, give birth to white and black varieties, though there has been no change either in climate or in food. The case is the same with domestic pigeons. But even supposing that the most general features of animal colouring could be explained on this hypothesis—which they cannot be—there would still remain the more remarkable cases of tree-frogs, which resemble bark, and of the so-called leaf-butterflies, which when at rest are indistinguishable from leaves; and the existence of such cases is a stumbling-block in the way of all theories save the theory of natural selection.

For according to the theory of natural selection each species of animals will be characterized by that shade of colour which is most advantageous to the species in the struggle for existence. Now, as Mr. Wallace observes, "concealment is useful to many animals, and absolutely essential to some. Those which have numerous enemies from which they cannot escape by rapidity of motion, find safety in concealment. Those which prey upon others must also be so constituted as not to alarm them by their presence or their approach, or they would soon die of hunger." In striking harmony with this general principle, we find that the great majority of animals are so coloured as best to escape notice, and that animals which are not protectively coloured are animals whose habits of life are such as to enable them to dispense with secrecy. The polar

bear is white, as the California bear is grey and the Hindustan bear black, because with a coat thus coloured it can best escape notice and secure its prey. The polar hare has a permanent coat of white; but the alpine hare, the arctic fox, and the ermine, which do not live amid perpetual snow, have coats that are white in the winter only. Arctic owls, falcons, and buntings are coloured snowy white; and the ptarmigan is white in winter, while "its summer plumage so exactly harmonizes with the lichen-covered stones among which it delights to sit, that a person may walk through a flock of them without seeing a single bird." In the sandy deserts of Northern Africa, all birds, without exception, all snakes and lizards, and all the smaller mammals, are of a uniform sandy colour. The camel is tinted like the desert in which he lives, and the same is true of the antelope and the Australian kangaroo. The tawny lion, says Mr. Wallace, "is a typical example of this, and must be almost invisible when crouched upon the sand or among desert rocks and stones." His brother, the tiger, "is a jungle animal, and hides himself among tufts of grass or of bamboos, and in these positions the vertical stripes with which his body is adorned must so assimilate with the vertical stems of the bamboo, as to assist greatly in concealing him from his approaching prey. How remarkable it is that besides the lion and tiger, almost all the other large cats are arboreal in their habits, and almost all have ocellated or spotted skins, which must certainly tend to blend them with the background of foliage; while the one exception, the puma, has an ashy brown uniform fur, and has the habit of clinging so closely to a limb of a tree, while waiting for his prey to pass beneath, as to be hardly distinguishable from the bark."[1] Such nocturnal animals as owls, goat-suckers, mice, bats, and moles are dusky-coloured. In tropical forests, where the trees are laden with green foliage all the year round, we find brilliant green

[1] Wallace, *Natural Selection*, pp. 49, 53.

pigeons and parrots; while the northern snipe resembles the marshy vegetation in which it lives, and the woodcock, with its variegated browns and yellows, is inconspicuous among the autumn leaves.[1] Arboreal iguanas are tinted leafy green; and out of many species of tropical tree-snakes there is but one which is not green, and this kind conceals itself during the daytime in holes. Flat fish, like the skate and flounder, are coloured like the gravel beneath them. Fishes which live among gorgeous coral reefs are magnificently tinted. The brilliant red hippocampi of Australia dwell among sea-weed of the same colour. And numerous other examples from the vertebrate sub-kingdom are given by Mr. Wallace, from whose remarkable essay the examples here given are culled.

Before going farther, let us note how completely these interesting phenomena are in harmony with the theory of natural selection. The variability of the hues of domestic animals descended from a monotonously-coloured wild species, shows that there is no direct physiological necessity for the production of animals of a single given style of colouring. But it is tolerably obvious that in the struggle for existence, the most conspicuous among those animals which serve as food for others will be the soonest detected, killed, and eaten; while in general the most conspicuous carnivorous animals will be the most easily avoided, and hence will be the most likely to perish for lack of sustenance. And while it is not universally true of the higher animals, as it is of the lower animals and plants, that a much greater number perish than survive, the destruction of life is nevertheless so great that the fate of each creature must often depend upon apparently trivial circumstances. The explanation would therefore be satisfactory, even if protective shades

[1] The general principle is well stated by Emerson, in this pretty quatrain:

"He took the colour of his vest
From rabbit's coat and grouse's breast;
For as the wild kinds lurk and hide,
So walks the huntsman unespied."

of colouring could be regarded as circumstances of slight importance,—which they cannot.

Since, therefore, it is natural selection which keeps up the protective hues of animals, by killing off all save the least conspicuous individuals, we may understand why it is that animals which have for several generations been domesticated no longer retain, without considerable deviation, their protective style of colouring. Freed from the exigencies of wild life, there is no longer an imperious need for concealment, and hence the unfavourably coloured individuals survive like the rest, and variety appears among members of the same species. In the cat family, which appears to have been originally arboreal, there is a strong tendency to the production of stripes and spots. In the lion, which is not arboreal, and in the puma, owing to the peculiarity above mentioned, these variegated markings have been almost wholly weeded out by natural selection.[1] But in the domestic cat, along with these spots and stripes which occasionally show its blood-relationship with the leopard and tiger, we more often meet with colours not paralleled among the wild species; now and then we see cats which are coal-black or snowy white. Cows, horses, sheep, dogs, and fowl, furnish parallel examples. Thus too we may understand why the sable and the Canadian woodchuck retain their brown fur during the winter; for the one can subsist on berries, and is far more agile than any of its foes, while the other lives in burrows by the riverside and catches small fish that swim by in the water. And thus we may understand why it is that in the case of birds which build open nests, the female is dull coloured like the nest; while on the other hand, the females of birds which build domed nests are often as brightly coloured as the males.

[1] The variegated marking usually appears, however, in lion-cubs; thus showing that the variegated colouring of the leopard and tiger is relatively primary, while the monotonous colouring of the adult lion is relatively secondary.

Turning now to the insect world, we find a vast abundance of corroborative proof. Among the tiger-beetles examined by Mr. Wallace in the Malay islands, those which lived upon wet mossy stones in mountain brooks were coloured velvet green; others, found for the most part on dead leaves in the forest, were brown; others again, "never seen except on the wet mud of salt marshes, were of a glossy olive so exactly the colour of the mud as only to be distinguished when the sun shone," by casting a shadow. "In the tropics there are thousands of species of insects which rest during the day clinging to the bark of dead or fallen trees; and the greater portion of these are delicately mottled with grey and brown tints, which though symmetrically disposed and infinitely varied, yet blend so completely with the usual colours of the bark, that at two or three feet distance they are quite indistinguishable." Moths, which when resting expose the upper surfaces of their wings, have these dull-coloured. Butterflies, on the other hand, which rest with their wings raised perpendicularly and laid together so as to show only the under surfaces, have the upper surfaces brilliantly coloured, while the exposed under surfaces are dusky and inconspicuous, or even marked in imitation of leaves. Mr. Wallace describes an East Indian butterfly whose wings are superbly tinted with blue and orange: this butterfly is a very swift flyer and is never known to settle save among the dead leaves in the dry forests which it frequents. When settled, with its wings raised, it imitates a shrivelled leaf so perfectly that even the keen eye of the naturalist can hardly detect it. This protective colouring is found throughout the whole immense order to which belong grasshoppers, crickets, and locusts; the most remarkable instance being furnished by the so-called "walking-leaf," to which no description can do justice. On the other hand, hornets, bees, and wasps, which are protected by their stings, are brilliantly but not in general protectively coloured. Bugs

and ground-beetles emit a disagreeable, pungent smell, and they are often conspicuously coloured. But the most wonderful of all are the cases of protective mimicry. The heliconidæ are among the most beautiful of South American butterflies. Being never eaten by birds, on account of a nauseous liquid which exudes from them when touched, they are not only very lazy flyers, but have the under sides of their wings as gorgeously tinted as the upper side, so that they can be seen from quite a long distance. From the same cause they are prodigiously numerous, swarming in all the tropical forests. Now it is obvious that if another butterfly, not protected by a disagreeable odour or taste, were to resemble the heliconia in colouring, it would be as efficiently protected as by imitating a dead leaf or dry twig; provided that there were but few of these butterflies among a large number of heliconias. For, as Mr. Wallace says, "if the birds could not distinguish the two kinds externally, and there were on the average only one eatable among fifty uneatable, they would soon give up seeking for the eatable ones, even if they knew them to exist." Now along with the heliconidæ there does, in fact, live a distinct family of butterflies, the pieridæ, most of which are white, and which are anatomically as distinct from the heliconidæ as a lion from a buffalo. But of these pieridæ there is one genus, the leptalis, which exactly resembles the heliconias in external appearance. So close is the resemblance that such expert naturalists as Mr. Bates and Mr. Wallace have been repeatedly deceived by it at the time of capture. Moreover, each species of this genus leptalis is a copy of the particular species of heliconia which lives in the same district. Every band and spot and fleck of colour in the heliconia is accurately reproduced in the leptalis; and besides this, the lazy mode of flight is also imitated. While in point of numbers, we find about one leptalis to a thousand heliconias. Nor is this the only instance. So pre-eminently favoured are these beautiful

insects by their disgusting taste, that they are exactly imitated by at least three genera of diurnal moths. In other parts of the world similar phenomena have been noticed. The relationship of the leptalis to the heliconia is repeated in India, in the Philippine Islands, in the Malay archipelago, and in various parts of Africa; the protected insect being, in all these cases, very much less numerous than the insect whose colours it mimics. In similar wise, bees and wasps are often imitated by beetles, by flies and even by moths.

For further details I must refer to Mr. Wallace's essay, which is a singularly beautiful specimen of inductive reasoning. The facts already cited are quite enough to sustain the general conclusion that the colours of animals are in the main determined by the exigencies of the struggle for existence. Where it is for the advantage of an animal to be concealed, as in the great majority of cases, its colour, whether brilliant or sombre, is such as to protect it. But where the animal is otherwise adequately protected—either by its peculiar habits, by a sting, a disgusting odour or taste, or a hard carapace—and where it is not needful for it to be hidden from the prey upon which it feeds, then there is usually no reference to protection in the colour of the animal. In some of these cases, however, a very conspicuous colouring becomes protective as in the case of the jet-black toad which Mr. Darwin saw in La Plata, which emitted a poisonous secretion, and which, when crawling over the sandy plain, could not fail to be recognized by every passing creature as an object to be avoided.

In many cases the gorgeous tints of the otherwise protected male animal are due to what is called "sexual selection,"—to the continual selection of the more beautiful males by the females. To this cause is due the magnificent plumage of the male bird of paradise; and Mr. Darwin would similarly explain the brilliant colours of many male butterflies. In his work on the "Descent of Man" may be found an account

of the elaborate observations which have led to these conclusions. Without feeling it necessary to insist upon the validity of all the special explanations contained in that work, we must admit that the general theory is substantiated by a superabundance of inductive evidence. And when this kind of selection is taken in connection with the need for protective concealment, we have the means of explaining by far the greater part of the colouring found in the animal kingdom.

The colours of the vegetal kingdom have, to a considerable extent, been no less satisfactorily explained. "Flowers do not often need protection, but very often require the aid of insects to fertilize them, and maintain their reproductive powers in the greatest vigour. Their gay colours attract insects, as do also their sweet odours and honeyed secretions; and that this is the main function of colour in flowers is shown by the striking fact that those plants which can be perfectly fertilized by the wind, and do not need the aid of insects, rarely or never have gaily-coloured flowers."[1]

Returning for one moment to the case of animals, which are usually benefited by concealment but sometimes by conspicuousness, let us note Prof. Shaler's ingenious explanation of the rattlesnake's rattle. The existence of this appendage has long been a puzzle to philosophical naturalists, and Darwinians have been repeatedly challenged to account for the formation or preservation by natural selection of an organ assumed to be injurious to the species. The difficulty has lain in the assumption, too hastily made, that the noise of the rattle must be prejudicial to the snake by forewarning its enemies or prey of its presence, and thus giving the enemies time for sudden attack, and allowing the prey to escape. On the theory of natural selection, the preservation of the species must entail the atrophy of such an organ, or, rather, must prevent its origination, unless the

[1] Wallace, *Natural Selection*, p. 262.

damage occasioned by it be more than compensated by some utility not hitherto detected. Prof. Shaler's hypothesis, however, suggests the possibility that this whole speculation is fundamentally erroneous. Far from being injurious to the snake, by serving to warn its prey, it would appear that the rattle may be directly useful by serving as a decoy. Prof. Shaler has observed that the peculiar sound of the rattle is a very close imitation of the note emitted by a certain cicada common in American forests frequented by rattlesnakes; and according to his ingenious suggestion, the bird, hearing the note and thinking to make a meal of the cicada, advances upon its own destruction, becoming the eaten instead of the eater. If this be true, there may be data here for explaining some of the alleged phenomena of fascination, so far as rattlesnakes are concerned; and another case will be added to the numerous cases now on record in which certain animals have acquired, for utility's sake, peculiarities characteristic of totally different species. I should be more inclined, however, to adopt quite a different interpretation of the rattlesnake's rattle. As hinted above, the general law that animals are benefited by concealment has some important exceptions. In many cases, when an animal is especially noxious, it is for his advantage to be conspicuous, that enemies may recognize him at a distance and keep away from him. Thus, as we have seen, while grasshoppers, moths, and butterflies (on the exposed under-surfaces of their wings) are usually so coloured as best to escape notice, on the other hand, bees and wasps, which are protected by their stings, and many beetles, which are protected by a noxious taste or odour, are apt to be conspicuously coloured. And the jet-black toad of La Plata is a still better example. Now a rattlesnake is unquestionably a very noxious animal, and so dangerous to its enemies that they will always do well to keep out of its way. Moreover, the death-wound inflicted by it, though usually very sure, is somewhat slow in operation;

CHAPTER XI.

TWO OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED.

WHEN an objection to a complex theory in any department of science is so extremely obvious as to seem at first sight fatal to the theory, it is unwise to urge it in argument until we have very thoroughly considered the matter. Men like Laplace and Goethe, Spencer and Darwin, in framing their theories of evolution, are indeed liable to overlook difficulties which are so unobtrusive as to be detected only after prolonged observation; but they are very unlikely to overlook difficulties which are so conspicuous as to occur at once to the minds of a hundred general readers. When, therefore, a reader of average culture, who has perhaps never seriously bent his mind to the question of the origin of species, and who is very likely unacquainted with the sciences which throw light upon that subject, finds himself immediately confronted by difficulties in a theory which men of the highest learning and capacity have spent a quarter of a century in testing, common prudence should lead him to continue his study until he has made sure that the difficulty is not due to his own ignorance rather than to the shortcomings of the theory. This wholesome caution is too seldom manifested by literary reviewers, many of whom, in criticizing Mr. Darwin's theory without having duly read his works,

allege certain objections as being quite obvious to all intelligent people, save to the one-sided speculator who is supposed to have ignored them. In Mr. Darwin's case, this mode of treatment is peculiarly impertinent, since even the less obvious objections to the theory of natural selection were for the most part foreseen and answered in the first edition of the "Origin of Species,"—a book to which, as to an arsenal of scientific facts, one must still resort who would deal intelligently with the latest criticisms directed against the theory.

The most obvious objection to the Darwinian theory is the paucity, or, as it is often incorrectly alleged, the absence, of transitional forms in the various sedimentary strata. This is at first sight a weighty objection against the doctrine of natural selection, according to which the progress has been effected by infinitesimal increments; although it is of no force against the doctrine of derivation, as held by Mr. Mivart, who rejects the maxim *Natura non facit saltum*, and maintains that progress has been effected by sudden jumps, occurring at rhythmical intervals. Mr. Mivart's suggestion, however, cannot be entertained as a scientific hypothesis so long as it alleges no physical agencies competent to effect the sudden jumps from one specific form to another; nor does the comparative paucity of transitional forms in a fossil state afford any reason for our adopting it. A brief consideration will show us that the fact is entirely consistent with the theory of progress by minute variations.

In the first place, let us note that in general intermediate transitional forms must be the soonest killed off in the struggle for existence; and that, especially, where two strains or varieties become further differentiated into true species, it is the extreme forms which multiply at the expense of those which are intercalated between them. Here, as on a former occasion, our comprehension of the argument will be facilitated by a reference to the analogous set of phenomena which occur during the process of lin-

guistic differentiation. It is held by most philologists that all languages in the tertiary or amalgamative stage of development must have previously existed in the secondary or agglutinative stage,—and, at a yet earlier period, in the primary or juxtapositive stage, of which the Chinese is a still living example. Against this view M. Renan has urged the absence or paucity of transitional forms connecting one class of languages with another. Now in answering M. Renan's objection, I have begun by showing, from a consideration of the Romanic dialects, that the difficulty is only imaginary. "A language like Latin, spread over a vast space of country in imperfectly civilized times, inevitably breaks up into a host of local *patois*. Each secluded rustic community has its own style of pronunciation, its own choice of words and syntactical devices, its own method of contracting or otherwise modifying its expressions. And although the inhabitants of any given town can usually communicate with those of the next town, the slight differences accumulate until intercourse between distant places is no longer practicable. In such a state of things we find plenty of transitional dialects, as the Genoese and Provençal between Italian and French, and the Balearic and Catalan between French and Spanish. The Tuscan can understand the Genoese, the Genoese can understand the dweller in Piedmont, the Piedmontese can understand the Vaudois, the Vaudois can understand the Lyonnais, and so on until we come to Paris; but the Tuscan and the Parisian cannot understand each other. Now the progress of civilization in each country tends to kill out the *patois*, elevating that variety of the language which has been made the vehicle of the dominant literature to supremacy over the more provincial forms. Increased facilities of communication, and the growth of large centres of population, and commercial as well as literary activity, end by making the inhabitants of all parts of the country speak and write

more and more like those of its intellectual metropolis. And in this way the intermediate dialects slowly disappear, leaving two languages with thoroughly distinct individualities, like Italian and French."[1] Now even here, as I go on to show, the relationships among the dialects have become sufficiently obscured—owing to disappearance of connecting links—to allow M. Raynouard to maintain the paradox that the modern Romanic languages are descended, not directly from the Latin, but from the old Provençal. And in such countries as Hindustan, the processes of divergence, and accompanying obliteration, have gone on to such an extent that Bengali has been mistaken for a non-Aryan language.

Here in the domain of language we see that competition is most severe and destructive between closely allied forms, and that the extremes will vigorously flourish long after the short-lived means have been crushed out of existence. The maxim *In medio tutissimus ibis* does not apply to such cases. We have now to observe that among the phenomena which natural history deals with, a quite similar process goes on. First we may note, with Mr. Darwin, that "as the species of the same genus usually have, though by no means invariably, much similarity in habits and constitution, and always in structure, the struggle will generally be more severe between them, if they come into competition with each other, than between the species of distinct genera. We see this in the recent extension over parts of the United States of one species of swallow having caused the decrease of another species. The recent increase of the missel-thrush in parts of Scotland has caused the decrease of the song-thrush. How frequently we hear of one species of rat taking the place of another species under the most different climates! In Russia the small Asiatic cockroach has every-

[1] "The Genesis of Language," *North American Review*, Oct. 1869, pp. 334, 335.

where driven before it its great congener. In Australia the imported hive-bee is rapidly exterminating the small stingless native bee. One species of charlock has been known to supplant another species; and so in other cases. We can dimly see why the competition should be most severe between allied forms, which fill nearly the same place in the economy of nature; but probably in no one case could we precisely say why one species has been victorious over another in the great battle of life." [1]

For our present purpose, however, it is not needful that we should be able to accomplish the latter task, which would require a knowledge of the minutiæ of the organic world such as is not likely to be possessed by anyone for a long time to come. It is enough for us to note that the ordinary process of competition, among organisms as among dialects, tends to kill out the means much sooner than the extremes. Still more clear will this become, if we recur to one of the hypothetical illustrations given in the preceding chapter. It was there shown that, in the case of a group of ruminants hitherto isolated from carnivorous foes, and in which different strains or varieties have begun to establish themselves, a newly-arriving incident force, in the shape of strong and swift carnivora, will at once tend to exterminate all the intermediate forms, while the extremes will not only be indefinitely preserved, but will become yet more widely different from each other. Now this hypothetical case is probably a fair sample of a very large proportion—perhaps the majority—of the cases in which specific variations have been rapidly accumulated and persistently fixed. It is by no means likely that variation has gone on throughout the past with a uniform pace; but there must rather have been immensely long periods of comparative stability, alternating with relatively brief periods, during which newly-introduced sets of circumstances have tended to enhance

[1] *Origin of Species*, 6th edit., p. 59.

and accumulate variations on either side of a hitherto established mean. Such a conclusion is implied by the theory of natural selection, according to which specific variation occurs, not in conformity to some mysterious law of progress uniformly operating, but only in conformity to some more or less conspicuous alteration in the sum-total of the conditions of existence.

It follows, therefore, that in general, when incipient varieties are differentiated into well-marked species, the number of intermediate forms must be immeasurably smaller than the numbers of forms contained in the resulting species to which they serve as the transition. During epochs of rapid divergence, the means may all be extinguished after a few hundred generations, while the generations of the extremes which persist thereafter may be numbered by tens of thousands. Suppose, for example, two great islands separated by a shallow sea. During long ages, while the floor of this intervening sea is constantly rising, the specific changes occurring on either island may be quite few and unimportant, and such fossil records as are left will indicate a general persistence of type. But when in course of time the process of elevation has converted this intervening channel into an isthmus connecting the two islands, there must inevitably ensue a marked change in the conditions of existence in both regions. Extinction will go on at a relatively rapid pace; and, as above illustrated, this extinction must ordinarily result in the disappearance of intermediate forms and the preservation of extremes. After a while this process must result in the establishment of an approximate equilibrium among the forms of life over both areas, such as formerly obtained over each area separately. And thus for a long time to come, the specific changes occurring will again be few and unimportant.

Thus we see graphically illustrated the truth that, in comparison with the myriads of individuals comprising the well-

defined species which propagate themselves through long ages with relative stability of character, the number of intermediate individuals which ever come into existence must be relatively small. We have next to note that, even of this relatively small number of individuals, a still smaller relative number are likely to leave after death a permanent fossil record of their existence.

In the first place it is only by a rare combination of circumstances that any plant or animal gets fossilized at all. The chances were nearly infinite against the preservation of any of the very earliest organisms, with their soft and speedily decaying textures. The higher land animals, on the other hand, owe their occasional preservation to the accidents of dying in sheltered caves, or of being covered with blown sand or peat-moss, or of being frozen in Arctic ice. Trees with solid trunks, littoral and marine animals, especially crustaceans and shell-covered mollusks, are more likely to be preserved than other organisms. But, in the second place, the majority of the organisms once fossilized are afterwards destroyed along with the sedimentary strata which contain them. Since there have been several enormously long alternating periods of elevation and of subsidence, it follows that all the older sedimentary strata must have been metamorphosed by volcanic heat. These oldest rocks have sunk to a depth of six or eight miles, down below the ocean-floor, where they have been metamorphosed by the heat of the molten liquid below, and whence they have again been slowly shoved up above water-level, with all traces of their organic contents obliterated. This process must have occurred so many times as to have destroyed all but the later records of life. The title "palæozoic," formerly applied to the Silurian rocks, is a misnomer. It was formerly supposed that there were no fossil-bearing rocks below the Silurian. But within a few years the Cambrian and Laurentian strata have been discovered, carrying us back into an antiquity nearly twice as

great as that to which we had reached with the Silurian rocks; and it is now generally admitted that even the Laurentian strata are modern compared with the beginnings of life upon our globe.

But this is not all. Along with the immensely long geologic rhythms, which have thus entailed the periodic metamorphosis of strata, there have been going on minor rhythms, resulting in the alternate deposit and denudation of fossil-bearing strata. Each of the sedimentary strata now surviving was deposited during an epoch of subsidence, and since its elevation to its present position has been more or less denuded. Now it is only during epochs of subsidence that permanent fossil-bearing strata can be deposited. During epochs of elevation the newly-formed sedimentary deposit is rapidly disintegrated by the action of coast-waves; and even those thin deposits which are made during an epoch of subsidence are in the next-recurring epoch of elevation soon worn away. It is thus only the thicker strata deposited during an epoch of subsidence which have preserved for our inspection a few specimens of the organisms living at the time when they were deposited.

But in close juxtaposition to this comes the remarkable fact that the most rapid variation among specific forms must take place during epochs of elevation. For since the only variations preserved by natural selection are those which bring the organism into closer adaptation to its environment; and since in most cases the organic environment of any group of organisms, comprising its enemies, competitors, and prey, is a much more important factor of change than its inorganic environment, comprising climate and soil; it follows that those periods during which groups of organisms, hitherto isolated, are gradually brought into contact with one another, must be the periods most favourable for specific change. The most rapid variation, attended by the greatest frequency of transitional forms, will therefore occur during those epochs of

elevation when archipelagos are being converted into continents, and when shallow parts of the sea, hitherto divided by deep channels, are getting practically united together by the diminishing depth of the channel. During such periods it is not only the inorganic agencies of climate and soil which will be altered; the organic environment of each group of organisms will be immensely increased in extent and heterogeneity. The struggle for existence will increase in violence, and there will be an increased amount both of variation and of extinction.

We are thus driven to the remarkable conclusion, not only that each system of fossiliferous strata now remaining has been preceded and followed by systems destroyed as fast as they were formed, but also that the systems thus destroyed coincided with the periods which must have been richest in transitional forms.

But notwithstanding the extreme imperfection of the geological record, and notwithstanding these special difficulties in the way of finding transitional forms, such forms are frequently met with. Indeed it may be asserted, as one of the most significant truths of palæontology, that extinct forms are almost always intercalary between forms now existing. Not only species, genera, and families, but even orders of contemporary animals, apparently quite distinct, are now and then fused together by the discovery of extinct intermediate forms. In Cuvier's time, horse, tapir, pig, and rhinoceros were ranked as a distinct order from cow, sheep, deer, buffalo, and camel. But so many transitional forms have been found in tertiary strata that pachyderms and ruminants are now united in a single order. By numerous connecting links the pig is now seen to be closely united with the camel and the antelope. Similar results relating to the proboscidians, the hyæna family of carnivora, the apes, the horse, and the rhinoceros, have been obtained from the exploration of a single locality near Mount Pentelikos in Greece. Among

more than seventy species there discovered, the gradational arrangement of forms was so strongly marked, that the great palæontologist, M. Gaudry, became a convert to Mr. Darwin's theory in the course of the search.[1] Referring for many more such examples to the last edition of Sir Charles Lyell's "Principles of Geology," let me further observe that there has as yet been but little search for fossils save in Europe and North America, and even these areas have by no means been thoroughly explored. Concerning South America much less is known, and the greater portions of Asia, Africa, and Australia are just so much *terra incognita* to the palæontologist. As M. Gaudry observes, a few strokes of the pick-axe at the foot of Mount Pentelikos have revealed to us the closest connecting links between forms which seemed before very widely separated: far closer will such links be drawn when a considerable portion of the earth's surface shall have been thoroughly investigated.

The argument from "missing links," therefore, in so far as it has any validity at all, is an argument which rests entirely upon negative evidence. But negative evidence, as everyone knows, is a very unsafe basis for argument.[2] A

[1] We may also profitably consider the toxodon, found by Mr. Darwin in South America, which is "one of the strangest animals ever discovered. In size it equalled an elephant or megatherium, but the structure of its teeth, as Mr. Owen states, proves indisputably that it was intimately related to the Gnawers, the order which at the present day includes most of the smallest quadrupeds: in many details it is allied to the pachydermata: judging from the position of its eyes, ears, and nostrils, it was probably aquatic, like the dugong and manatee, to which it is also allied. How wonderfully," says Mr. Darwin, "are the different orders, at the present time so well separated, blended together in different points of the structure of the toxodon!"—Darwin, *Voyage of the Beagle*, p. 82. Compare the remarks on the quaternary fauna of Western Europe in Sir John Lubbock's *Prehistoric Times*, 2nd edition, pp. 296–298.

[2] "For instance, the several species of the chthamalinæ (a sub-family of sessile cirrhipeds) coat the rocks all over the world in infinite numbers: they are all strictly littoral, with the exception of a single Mediterranean species, which inhabits deep water, and this has been found fossil in Sicily, whereas not one other species has hitherto been found in any tertiary formation: yet it is known that the genus chthamalus existed during the Chalk period."—Darwin, *Origin of Species*, 6th edit., p. 271.

single item of positive evidence will always outweigh any amount of negative evidence. A single case in which two or three species or genera are demonstrably connected with each other through lineally intermediate forms, is enough to outweigh the case of a thousand species or genera in which no such linear connection has yet been demonstrated. Now there can be no question that *Equus*, *Hipparion*, and *Anchitherium*, are quite distinct genera; and a comparison of the skeletons of the three leaves it equally unquestionable that the hipparion is simply a more ancient horse, and that the anchitherium is simply a more ancient hipparion. As Prof. Huxley observes, "the process by which *Anchitherium* has been converted into *Equus* is one of specialization, or of more and more complete deviation from what might be called the average form of an ungulate mammal. In the horses, the reduction of some parts of the limbs, together with the special modification of these which are left, is carried to a greater extent than in any other hoofed mammals. The reduction is less and the specialization is less in the hipparion, and still less in the anchitherium; but yet, as compared with other mammals, the reduction and specialization of parts in the anchitherium remain great." [1] But as we go back still farther into the Eocene epoch, we find *Plagiolophus*, a genus intermediate between the horse and the agouti, in which the reduction and specialization of parts is still less. Here, where the exploration has been relatively complete, the intermediate forms are so numerous as to leave no doubt whatever as to the genetic kinship.[2] And similarly of the rhinocerotidæ and hyænidæ

[1] *Critiques and Addresses*, p. 195.

[2] I may add that, in particular, numerous extinct forms intercalary between man and ape are likely to be discovered when we search for them in those parts of the earth where they are likely to exist,—namely, in Africa, Madagascar, South-eastern Asia, and the Malay Archipelago. Such forms are not likely, however, to be directly intermediate between man and the gorilla or the chimpanzee. For these are probably aberrant types, and the connection between man and the anthropoid apes is to be sought much lower down,—

Prof. Huxley says, "it is indeed a conceivable (?) supposition that every species of rhinoceros and every species of hyæna, in the long succession of forms between the Miocene and the present species, was separately constructed out of dust, or out of nothing, by supernatural power; but until I receive distinct evidence of the fact, I refuse to run the risk of insulting any sane man by supposing that he seriously holds such a notion."

It thus appears that the argument from "missing links," which to the general reader may appear so obviously fatal to the Darwinian theory, is to the student of palæontology by no means alarming. Our brief survey of the facts in the case has shown us *first*, that transitional varieties are always likely to have been less numerous in individuals than the well-defined species which they serve to connect; *secondly*, that the geologic eras which have left in the rocks the record of their organic life have been usually the eras in which variation and extinction have been least rapid, and in which accordingly transitional varieties have been least numerous; and *thirdly*, that in spite of all these adverse circumstances, transitional forms have already been discovered in considerable numbers, while it is fair to expect that many more will be discovered when by and by we have come to know the earth's surface more intimately.

Of all the objections which have been urged against the theory of natural selection, this objection, from the paucity of transitional forms, is the least weighty, though probably the most obvious. The second objection which we have to consider, though less immediately obvious, is more weighty; and though there is no reason for regarding it as insuperable, we must admit that it has not yet been entirely disposed of. This objection is implicated with the difference

perhaps near the point of departure of the anthropoid apes from the lower monkeys and lemurs. See the anatomical evidence very well presented in Mr. Mivart's recent work on *Man and Apes*.

between the morphological and the physiological definitions of species, and is usually known as the argument from the infertility of hybrids. As ordinarily stated, indeed, this argument is merely the expression of a sorry confusion of ideas. By a curious misunderstanding the infertility of the mule is often urged as a direct objection to the Darwinian theory. But this is putting the cart before the horse. It is not the infertility of the offspring of the horse and the ass which should be cited as an obstacle to the theory of natural selection, but it is the fertility of the offspring of the carrier-pigeon and the pouter, or of the pouter and tumbler. Morphologically the carrier, the pouter, and the tumbler may well be regarded as distinct species artificially developed from a common wild stock; but so long as mutual infertility is held to be the physiological test by which we are to distinguish between varieties and species, it may be argued that, in spite of their great morphological differences, the carrier and the tumbler are only varieties and not true species. And going a step farther, it may be argued that until the theory of natural selection has accounted for the rise of infertility between races descended from a common stock, it has not completely performed the task of reconciling deduction with observation.

Against the derivation theory in general, this objection has no weight whatever. That races originally fertile together should, after long subjection to different sets of circumstances, become infertile with one another, is *à priori* in the highest degree probable, when we reflect upon the extreme sensitiveness of the reproductive system to changes of habit in the organism as a whole. When we remember that "the constitution of many wild animals is so altered by confinement that they will not breed even with their own females," we need not be surprised that the leopard and the lion, which during many ages have had very different habits of life, will not breed with each other. Nor need we wonder

that the horse and the ass, with less important differences in general habit, have become partially infertile together, to such an extent that their offspring are hopelessly barren. Though the *modus operandi* of this change is as yet ill-understood, it is nevertheless a change quite in harmony with what we know concerning the intimate dependence of the reproductive system upon the rest of the organism. And let us not fail to note that it is the achievement of this change in the capacities of the reproductive system which completes the demarcation between two bifurcating species, and finally prevents the indefinite multiplication of intermediate varieties.

But while this objection has no weight as against the theory of derivation in general, it may fairly be urged that the failure to explain the origination of mutual infertility is, for the present at least, a shortcoming on the part of the theory of natural selection. After the conclusive arguments brought up in our ninth chapter, the derivation theory will no longer, in the present work, be regarded as on trial: that the higher forms of life are derived from lower forms, will be taken as proved. But whether the theory of natural selection has completely fulfilled its proposed task of explaining the mode in which such derivation has been brought about, is quite another question. And while admitting the full force of the considerations alleged by Mr. Darwin, in his admirable chapter on Hybridism, it seems to me that there is a gap at this point which further research will be required to fill.[1] As Prof. Huxley reminds us, "it must not be for-

[1] I doubt if the hypothesis of natural selection, taken alone, will afford the solution of this problem. It seems more likely that such considerations will have to enter as are presented in Mr. Spencer's *Principles of Biology*, vol. i. pp. 209-291. Concerning what may be called the "dynamics of heredity," we know as yet but little; but as far as speculation has already gone, Mr. Darwin's theory of pangenesis seems to me decidedly inferior to Mr. Spencer's theory of physiological units. I do not discuss these theories here, because it is not necessary for the general purposes of this work. It may do no harm, however, to remind some of my readers that "pangenesis" is merely

gotten that the really important fact, so far as the inquiry into the origin of species goes, is that there are such things in nature as groups of animals and of plants, whose members are incapable of fertile union with those of other groups; and that there are such things as hybrids, which are absolutely sterile when crossed with other hybrids. For if such phenomena as these were exhibited by only two of those assemblages of living objects, to which the name of species . . . is given, it would have to be accounted for by any theory of the origin of species, and every theory which could not account for it would be, so far, imperfect." [1]

We have now reached a point at which we may pause for a moment to contemplate the theory of natural selection in its logical aspect, and to mark its character as a scientific hypothesis. A moment's inspection will reveal the absurdity of the thoughtless remark—sometimes heard from theologians and penny-a-liners—that the Darwinian theory rests upon purely gratuitous assumptions and can never be submitted to verification. On the contrary, the theory of natural selection, when analyzed, will be found to consist of eleven propositions, of which nine are demonstrated truths, the tenth is a corollary from its nine predecessors, and the eleventh is a perfectly legitimate postulate. Let us enumerate these propositions:—

1. More organisms perish than survive;
2. No two individuals are exactly alike;
3. Individual peculiarities are transmissible to offspring;
4. Individuals whose peculiarities bring them into closest adaptation with their environment, are those which survive and transmit their peculiar organizations;
5. The survival of the fittest thus tends to maintain an equilibrium between organisms and their environments;

a subsidiary hypothesis, with the possible inadequacy of which Mr. Darwin's main theory is in no way concerned.

[1] Huxley, *Lay Sermons*, p. 303.

6. But the environment of every group of organisms is steadily, though slowly, changing;

7. Every group of organisms must accordingly change in average character, under penalty of extinction;

8. Changes due to individual variation are complicated by the law that a change set up in any one part of a highly complex and coherent aggregate, like an organism, initiates changes in other parts;

9. They are further complicated by the law that structures are nourished in proportion to their use;

10. From the foregoing nine propositions, each one of which is indisputably true, it is an inevitable corollary that changes thus set up and complicated must eventually alter the specific character of any given group of organisms;

11. It is postulated that, since the first appearance of life upon the earth's surface, sufficient time has elapsed to have enabled such causes as the foregoing to produce all the specific heterogeneity now witnessed.

It seems to me that this summary fairly represents the logical character of the theory of natural selection. The theory is so strong that no scientific writer is disposed to deny that the process of natural selection has always gone on and must continue to go on. And the inference cannot be avoided that in due course of time the process must work specific variations. The only purely hypothetical portion of the theory is the assumption that past geologic time has been long enough to allow of the total process of evolution by such infinitesimal increments. But concerning this assumption, it is the clear verdict of logic, that if the theory is thoroughly substantiated in all its other portions, we have the right to claim as much time as is needful, provided we do not run counter to conclusions legitimately reached by astronomy, geology, or physics. Now concerning the age of the earth, neither astronomy, nor geology, nor physics, has as yet had anything conclusive to say; and it must be left for

future inquiries to give us the quantitative data requisite for settling this point.[1] We cannot yet, indeed, estimate the age of the last great glacial epoch with any approach to accuracy; yet the age which we assign to this epoch must enter as an important factor into our estimates of the antiquity of preceding epochs. But while this point remains undetermined, it may be noted that even the decision which leaves the smallest time for the operation of unaided natural selection can weaken the Darwinian theory only on the assumption that the agency already alleged by that theory has been the sole factor concerned in forwarding organic evolution; and this assumption, though it may have been made by over-confident disciples of Mr. Darwin, has never been made by Mr. Darwin himself. Mr. Darwin is too profoundly scientific in spirit to imagine that, with all his unrivalled patience and sagacity, he has completely solved one of the most intricate problems with which the student of nature has ever been called upon to deal. It is more than likely that future research will disclose other agencies which have cooperated with natural selection in accelerating the diversification of species. Meanwhile the evidence in behalf of the first ten propositions involved in the Darwinian theory is sufficiently strong to make it apparent that a vast amount of specific change must have taken place, and also that natural selection has been a chief factor in producing that change. To the arguments which in our ninth chapter were seen to overthrow the dogma of fixity of species, may now be added the argument that at least one group of clearly-defined agencies is at work, with which, in the long run, the fixity of species must become incompatible. The explanation of the details of specific differentiation may well form the subject of cautious investigation for many generations of observers and

[1] The reader who wishes to see how fallacious all attempts at reaching the age of the earth from astronomico-physical arguments are likely to prove with our present resources, may consult Huxley's *Lay Sermons*, pp. 268-279.

thinkers. But enough has already been explained to draw forth the undeniable Fact of Derivation from the region of mystery in which it was formerly half-hidden, and thus to place the Theory of Derivation upon a thoroughly scientific basis. In expounding the way in which this has been done, we have obtained several useful conceptions, which will not fail to do us good service in future chapters.

CHAPTER XII.

ADJUSTMENT, DIRECT AND INDIRECT.

AN objection much less obvious than the two considered in the foregoing chapter, is brought up by Mr. Mivart against the theory of natural selection. In the Cuvierian classification, the marsupials were ranked as an order of mammalia, side by side with orders like the carnivora or rodentia. This arrangement is now obsolete. The class of mammals is no longer directly divided into orders, but is first separated into three sub-classes, the monodelphia, didelphia, and ornithodelphia. The latter sub-class, forming the link between mammals and sauroids, is now nearly extinct, being represented only by a single order, containing two genera, the Australian echidna and duck-bill. Leaving these aside, all other mammals, except the marsupials, are comprised within the sub-class monodelphia. The didelphia or marsupials are divided by Prof. Haeckel into eight orders; and between these orders and sundry orders of the higher monodelphia there is a curious parallelism. For example there is an order of edentate marsupials, there is a marsupial order of carnivora, and another of insectivora, and another of rodents, while the kangaroo strongly resembles the sub-order of ruminants, and the opossum is clearly related to the lemurs, or lowest of the primates. It becomes, then, an interesting problem to settle

the genetic relationships between the two sub-classes. Did the order of apes descend from the ape-like marsupials, the monodelphian carnivora from the didelphian carnivora, the higher rodents from the marsupial rodents, and so on? If so, it is difficult to see how the pouch should have been lost, and the placenta developed in so many different orders independently: such a number of exact coincidences seem hardly probable. On the other hand, did all the monodelphia descend from one didelphian form? If so, it is strange that the differentiation into orders should have gone on so similarly in the two sub-classes, resulting, for example, in the production of marsupial mice which in general appearance are hardly distinguishable from placental mice.

Birds and reptiles present an equally puzzling cross-relation. Upon no theory are these the direct ancestors of mammals, although the lowest mammals are both bird-like and reptilian in appearance. The duck-bill, belonging to the mammalian sub-class of ornithodelphia, somewhat resembles a lizard with a bird's beak. Embryology shows that the three classes are divergent offshoots from an amphibious or batrachioid ancestor; but the birds and reptiles resemble each other much more closely than either resembles the mammalia, so that Prof. Huxley joins them together in the super-class or province of sauroids. So far all is plain; but when we inquire by what forms the birds and reptiles are linked most closely together, we are met by a difficulty. Birds are divided into two sub-classes: the ostrich, cassowary, emeu, dinornis, etc., are grouped together as *struthious* birds, while all other existing forms belong to the sub-class of *carinate* birds. Now until quite lately it was supposed that all birds were descended from an extinct reptilian form like that ancient reptile, the flying pterodactyl. For the resemblances in structure between the pterodactyls and the carinate birds are striking enough to have suggested an immediate community of origin. Nevertheless, within the past seven years,

a much stronger case has been made out in favour of the descent of the struthious birds from large reptilian forms akin to the dinosauria,—of which extinct order the member most commonly known is the gigantic iguanodon. Now here, says Mr. Mivart, is a dilemma just like the one which confronted us in the case of mammals. If all birds started from the pterodactyl, why do the struthious birds so strongly resemble a totally different reptile? If all birds started from a dinosaurus, why do the carinate birds so strongly resemble the pterodactyl? If we try to split the difference, and say that the carinate birds started from the pterodactyl, while the struthious birds started from the dinosaurus, the difficulty is immensely increased. For then the question arises, how could the struthious and the carinate birds, starting from such different points, have come to resemble each other so strongly?

Mr. Mivart is careful to state that these zoological cross-relations do not constitute an obstacle to the theory of evolution. They are difficulties only on the theory that organic evolution has been solely caused by the natural selection of fortuitous variations. To make this more clear, let us provisionally accept one of each of the pairs of alternatives offered by the two cases just described. Let us agree, with Prof. Haeckel, that all the monodelphian mammals have come from one didelphian; and let us agree, with Prof. Huxley, that the kinship between birds and reptiles is closest in the case of the struthious birds and the dinosaurians. Now we are obliged to maintain that the original monodelphian branched off into a dozen or more forms, of which six or seven happen to agree remarkably, in general appearance and in habits of life, with six or seven of the forms into which the original didelphian had at an earlier date branched off. And we are also obliged to maintain that the remarkable shoulder-structure of the pterodactyl, in which it agrees so closely with the carinate birds, was independently evolved

and has a purely physiological significance. That is to say, the resemblance of the pterodactyl to carinate birds is a secondary adaptive resemblance, like the less marked resemblance of bats to birds, or like the resemblance of a porpoise to a fish. And this view, which seems to be Prof. Huxley's, is rendered probable by the fact that in wing-structure the pterodactyl differs from birds in much the same way that a bat does.

We are now extricated from our imbroglio with regard to classification, but we are still left confronted with the difficulty of supposing that the natural selection of casual variations can so often have resulted in producing whole orders of closely-resembling animals from distinct ancestral orders. Other facts, brought up by Mr. Mivart, still further increase the apparent difficulty. The most important of all these relate to the development of the higher organs of sense in the three sub-kingdoms of annulosa, mollusks, and vertebrates. Coincidences between the members of any one of these sub-kingdoms and the members of the others, are not to be attributed to community of origin. No naturalist supposes that an annulose animal, or a true mollusk, has ever been developed into a vertebrate. And while the mollusks and vertebrates appear to have diverged from a molluscoid ancestor akin to the still-living ascidians, the annulose sub-kingdom has a totally different pedigree. To discover any likeness between the two great groups, we must follow them back to those remotest ancestors who possessed hardly any distinctively animal characteristics. Bearing all this in mind, it is a striking fact that the eye of the cuttle-fish, which is the highest of mollusks, appears to be constructed like the eyes of vertebrates. It apparently contains not only a similar retina, but also a lens, the choroid and sclerotic tunics, and the vitreous and aqueous humours. Now this coincidence cannot be due to community of inheritance, for the vertebrate and molluscous sub-kingdoms

are linked together only at their lowest extremities, and while the lowest vertebrate has an eye far inferior to the one just described, the molluscoid ascidians have merely rudimentary eye-spots. The coincident structures have therefore been independently developed. Again, Mr. Mivart urges that the agreement cannot be explained on the assumption "that the conditions requisite for effecting vision are so rigid that similar results in all cases must be independently arrived at"; for the eyes of the higher insects, which are excellent visual organs, differ very widely in structure from those of the cuttle-fish and the higher vertebrates. Here, therefore, is a difficulty; and it is still further increased if the alleged fact be true, that there is a similarly close correspondence between the auditory structures in the vertebrates and in the cuttle-fish.

In presenting these difficulties I have closely followed Mr. Mivart, whose scientific arguments are usually stated with a clearness and precision which one would gladly see paralleled in the philosophic discussions by which they are supplemented. I have selected these arguments because they seem to me to constitute the strongest portion of the case which Mr. Mivart has brought to bear against the theory of natural selection; and also because by seeing whither they tend, we shall begin to see how the theory of natural selection must be supplemented, before it can become a complete explanation of the phenomena with which it deals.

Now we must at the outset admit that natural selection must act upon every individual variation which is distinctly advantageous or injurious to the species,—always preserving the former and rejecting the latter. This process must equally go on, whether the variation is a mere idiosyncrasy, such as we call fortuitous, or whether it is one that is manifested simultaneously by a large number of individuals, so that it may be traced to causes acting upon them all in common. Now this latter case is the one which must here be taken into the account. If a large number of individuals may simul-

taneously vary in a given direction, and if this may often happen within the limits of single generations, it is obvious that we have here a factor of specific change not to be lightly passed over. In estimating the effects of natural selection upon a number of variations which are, quite legitimately, taken for granted, we must not forget to generalize the variations in connection with some common cause to which they may be assignable. Now it cannot be denied that in any single generation of organisms variations are very likely to occur, throughout nearly the whole number of individuals, which are due to the direct adaptation of the species to its environing circumstances. When exhibited in the effects wrought upon the human constitution by exposure to changed physical conditions, such variations are known as acclimatization. Within the infinitesimal period of two centuries the English race in America has come to differ perceptibly, though very slightly, from the English race in Europe; and this very slight difference, which cannot be explained by the much overrated hypothesis of the infusion of foreign blood, and which certainly cannot be traced to natural selection, must be almost wholly due to direct adaptation to new physical and social conditions. Of kindred import is the fact that "twenty-nine kinds of American trees all differ from their nearest European allies in a similar manner, having leaves less toothed, buds and seeds smaller, fewer branchlets, etc." So M. Costa states "that young shells taken from the shores of England and placed in the Mediterranean at once altered their manner of growth, and formed prominent diverging rays like those on the shells of the proper Mediterranean oyster." We have seen that the direct action of physical agencies will by no means account for the chief features of colouring in the organic world; yet it appears to be true that members of the same species of birds are more brightly coloured when living in a clear dry atmosphere than when living near the coast. So, too, in the contour of their wings, the various

butterflies of Celebes all show parallel divergences, inexplicable by natural selection alone, from kindred species in Java and India. And a host of like facts concerning these insects are cited by Mr. Mivart from Mr. Wallace's essay on the Malayan Papilionidæ. More examples might be cited if this work were intended to be a scientific treatise on Darwinism; but for the comprehension of the present point, in its philosophic bearings, these illustrations will suffice.

Facts of this kind point to the conclusion that an inherent capacity for adaptive changes is possessed by all organisms. And by the phrase "inherent capacity" I do not mean to insinuate the existence of any *occulta vis*, or metaphysical "innate power," of which no scientific account is to be given in terms of matter and motion. An organism is a complex system of forces; even the simplest living patch of protoplasm is a highly complex system, but in the higher organisms the complication of forces is almost infinite, when compared with our limited powers of analysis. Now such a system of forces must, under penalty of overthrow, maintain both its internal equilibrium and its equilibrium with external incident forces. And this double maintenance of equilibrium necessitates a rhythmical redistribution of forces from moment to moment, of which, as was shown in the chapter on rhythm, the result must be continual change. Now the internal equilibration of the forces in the organism with each other, is generalized in the laws of growth, development, and heredity; while the external equilibration of the forces in the organism with environing forces, is generalized in the laws of variation and adaptation. As the result of the former process, all organisms tend to assume certain typical forms, as inevitably as crystals. In the case of the lowest organisms the forms assumed may possibly be due to the operation of chemical polarity similar (though much more involved) to that which gives form to crystals. In all but the lowest organisms the forms assumed are the expression of tendencies

due to the cooperation of countless ancestral forces; and such tendencies are now not improperly classified under the head of "physiological polarity,"—provided that nothing more is meant by "polarity" than the ability of certain special groups of forces to work different structural changes in different directions. So much for the internal adaptive process. But now, as the result of the parallel process of external adaptation, it follows that the forms due to the internal process can remain constant only so long as the environment remains unchanged. If the changes in the environment are too great or too sudden to be equilibrated by changes in the distribution of the system of internal forces, the system is overthrown, and the organism perishes. But if the external changes are moderate and gradual, the adjustment of the organism to them by means of internal changes, must result in that kind of organic variation known as direct adaptation. We need not be surprised, therefore, by the parallel variations of whole genera of American trees or Malayan butterflies; nor need we ascribe them, with certain recent writers, to "occult energies" of the metaphysical sort, or to a kind of pantheistic "intelligence" inherent in nature, or to any other agency unrecognizable by science; since the necessity for such parallel variations, wherever whole groups of organisms are exposed to like environing agencies, is a corollary from the fundamental principles of vital dynamics.

We are now in a position to amend quite materially the view thus far taken of the causes of organic evolution. Hitherto we have concerned ourselves too exclusively with the selection of variations, omitting to inquire into the character and mode of origin of the variations selected. But the latter point is no less important than the former. If variations might occur equally in all directions from the average standard, by reason of circumstances so indefinitely compounded as to make them seem fortuitous, then the

natural selection of such variations might well be pronounced incapable—save in very rare instances—of working entirely analogous results in organisms so genetically distinct as monodelphians and didelphians, or as vertebrates and mollusks. In other words, natural selection, acting upon such fortuitous individual variations, would tend to produce indefinitely increasing differentiations in many directions. Such differentiations are to be seen in the amazingly elaborate contrivances for the fertilization of orchids, the explanation of which is one of Mr. Darwin's most brilliant achievements. But when it is admitted that a great number of similar adaptive variations must be simultaneously occurring in the same direction, then it is obvious that the natural selection of such variations may often produce analogous results in different genera and families, or even in different orders, classes, or sub-kingdoms. Mr. Mivart alleges the many resemblances between whales and the ancient ichthyosaurians, as hardly explicable on the theory of the selection of fortuitous variations. But when we recollect that the vertebrate structure of mammals is at the outset homologous with that of reptiles, and that direct adaptation must of itself tend to produce similar variations alike in mammals and in reptiles which pass from a terrestrial into an aquatic environment, the resemblance between a whale and an ichthyosaurus ceases to be an enigma. The superficial resemblance of a whale to a fish is a fact of like nature. And in the case of amphibious carnivora, like the seal, direct adaptation to a partially marine environment has aided in producing fish-like limbs, while it has not interfered with the general likeness of the animal to certain families of land carnivora. So in the case of the pterodactyl as compared with carinate birds, we begin with skeletons constructed on the same plan, and we may expect to find that direct adaptation to the necessities of flight will tend to produce similar modifications of the shoulder-structure. But since, before

the appearance of pterodactyls, the dermal covering of reptiles was very likely as different from that of birds as it is now, so that a reptilian wing could not be formed by a modification of the dermal covering, we find, naturally enough, the wing of the pterodactyl formed, like that of the bat, by a modification of the skeleton. And this fact seems to justify us in the alternative which we have accepted, that the likeness of the pterodactyl to birds is no proof of immediate kinship, but only of secondary adaptive variation, as in the case of bats. A similar argument applies to the numerous likenesses between the higher mammals and the marsupials. At an ancient epoch the marsupials were a dominant race of animals, extending all over the world. But since they have been almost everywhere exterminated by their hardier monodelphian descendants, there is no difficulty in the view that direct adaptation to similar differences of environment, when aided by natural selection, has brought about a differentiation of the higher mammals analogous to that which had formerly taken place among the marsupials. That six or seven orders of monodelphians should vary in the same direction with six or seven orders of didelphians, is no more surprising than that twenty-nine kinds of American trees should all differ in the same direction from their European congeners. It is certainly far less surprising than would be the simultaneous loss of a pouch and acquirement of a placenta by a host of marsupial genera scattered all over the earth.

Pursuing the argument a step farther, we may begin to understand, in a general way, even the similarity of the eye of a cuttle-fish to the eye of a vertebrate. Utterly unlike a vertebrate in general structure, and so remotely akin that for practical purposes of argument the kinship is of no account,—if a cuttle-fish could be shown to possess numerous points of special resemblance to a vertebrate, the fact would be an obstacle to any theory of the origin of organic forms.

But the only special resemblances which are found to exist, are those between the eyes and the ears. Now these are organs in which such variations as occur must be in a pre-eminent degree directly adaptive. The eye, for example, contains an optical apparatus of which the function is the concentration of rays of light into a focus upon the retina. Such is the function discharged by the lens, and the vitreous and aqueous humours. Now, while the compound eyes of insects show us that this function can be discharged in more than one way, a brief consideration of the optical conditions in the case would show that it can only be accomplished in a few ways. Not only does the passage of the light directly tend to set up molecular rearrangements in the refracting matter which lies before the retina, but out of those rearrangements there are very few which can assist the focalizing process, so that natural selection, in preserving the best-refracting eyes, would have but very few directions in which to act. The anterior membrane might differentiate into a number of converging lenses, as in the higher annulosa, but if such a differentiation did not occur, it is difficult to see how the needful refraction could be secured, save by the differentiation of the successive strata which we call the aqueous, crystalline, and vitreous humours. This may serve to indicate the course of explanation to be taken. The physical conditions for securing very efficient vision being thus limited, and direct adaptation being such an important factor in the process, it does not seem at all strange that two eyes quite similar in structure should be independently produced. A precisely similar argument will apply to the case of the ear. And the force of these considerations is still further increased when we learn from Prof. Gegenbaur that the resemblances between the eyes of vertebrates and the eyes of cuttle-fishes are only superficial analogies, and not fundamental homologies, as Mr. Mivart's very exaggerated statement might lead one to suppose.

In all these cases, here too briefly summed up, natural selection must of course be regarded as steadily cooperating with direct adaptation. No matter whether individual variations are directly called forth by environing agencies, or are due to internal causes, in our ignorance of which we call them fortuitous, they must equally be the objects of natural selection wherever they influence, in the slightest degree, the individual's chances of survival. Thus the theory of natural selection is not superseded, but supplemented, by the class of considerations here suggested by Mr. Mivart's objections. Ordinarily, if not always, the two processes must go on in concert; and while the frequent occurrence of directly adaptive changes must greatly accelerate the operation of natural selection, on the other hand natural selection, by weeding out all cases of retrograde variation, must complete the work of direct adaptation.

There are, however, some conspicuous instances in which natural selection seems to play either a very subordinate part, or none at all. As we have just been considering eyes and ears, let us once more return to them, to show how certain peculiarities in their structure must be chiefly due to directly adaptive changes. Within the human ear, firmly fastened in the temporal bone, is a spirally-coiled chamber, known as the *cochlea*. Within this chamber there is a very elastic membrane, and on it lie the so-called *fibres of Corti*, which are a series of fibrous filaments placed side by side, with great regularity, so as to present somewhat the appearance of the key-board on a piano. It is now held by physiologists that this row of fibres is really a key-board, and that each fibre is set in vibration only by a particular musical note, exactly as an A-tuning-fork is set vibrating when A is sounded near it, but not when any other note is sounded. The auditory nerve, in passing into the cochlea, branches into an immense number of nerve-filaments, each of which communicates with one of the keys of this ear-piano. So that

when A is sounded on a musical instrument, the A-key within the ear vibrates, and transmits its vibrations to a special filament of the auditory nerve. If this view be correct, we have here a truly marvellous instance of differentiation. But now in what way can this structure have ever been useful to human beings in the struggle for life? Doubtless a considerable power of discriminating sounds is useful to any animal, but of what use can it be to distinguish between A and A-sharp? We may safely conclude, I think, that survival of the fittest has played quite a secondary part in this case. The explanation must be sought in the direct effects wrought by auditory vibrations upon the molecular structure of the cochlear fibres. And it is a system of effects which has not even yet been wrought in its present completeness save among highly civilized people. A savage cannot distinguish the slight variations in pitch by which our ears are delighted. And even among ourselves there are ears which can neither in melody discriminate between the ascending and the descending gamut, nor in harmony distinguish between the mellifluous tonic chord and the harsh inversions of the minor ninth. The defect may be compared to that of colour-blindness, although it is probably more common because the ear has been far less thoroughly trained than the eye. Now when we consider how much can be effected by individual training in enabling a moderately good ear to discriminate between quarters, eighths, and smaller fractions of a tone, and bear in mind that this training must consist in the further differentiation of the sensitive cochlear fibres, we have a strong argument in favour of the production of this wonderful structure by direct adaptation alone.

Concerning the human eye I need only say that in the retina it presents a structure closely analogous to the ear-piano just described. The chief layer of the retina is composed of little rods of nerve-tissue, packed closely together

like organ-pipes; and it is probable that each of these rods vibrates in unison with a particular ray of light.[1] Here is a case of extreme differentiation just like that witnessed in the ear; and substantially the same argument will apply to it. The survival of a primeval savage in the struggle for life would certainly depend to a considerable extent on his ability to discriminate certain colours as well as outlines by the eye, as also upon his ability to recognize the *timbre* or quality of certain sounds. But the power of distinguishing the delicate shades in a painting of Correggio could be no more useful, from a zoological point of view, than the power of appreciating the most subtle harmonic effects in a symphony of Schumann. For this extreme differentiation there would seem to be no assignable cause save the direct action of luminous waves upon the wonderfully sensitive and responsive nerve-tissue of civilized man.

Were it needful for the further illustration of our position, I might show how Mr. Spencer has proved that the structure of vertebral columns is also primarily due to directly adaptive changes. Many peculiarities in the shapes of plants and animals are probably thus to be explained. And in regard to the hues of organisms—those phenomena which are so beautifully explained by the Darwinian theory—there are some exceptions to be cited. The magnificent tints of many corals, of certain caterpillars, and of the shells of sundry mollusks, must undoubtedly be due to the direct working of such chemical affinities as produce our wonderful aniline dyes, or the rich tints of our American autumn woods.

But passing over all these interesting points, enough has been said to show that there are many phenomena of organic evolution which natural selection, when considered alone, will not suffice to account for. But, with the amendment

[1] This is the opinion of Helmholtz, the greatest living authority; and it i strengthened by Dr. Brown-Séquard's discovery of the number of fibres in the spinal cord which are specialized for the reception of particular sensations.

now agreed upon, there may be framed an outline of a tolerably complete classification of agencies. Let us reduce to a common form of expression the agencies contemplated in this and in the two preceding chapters.

Considered in the widest sense, the processes which we have seen to cooperate in the evolution of organisms are all processes of equilibration or adjustment. From the dynamical point of view, as has been shown in previous chapters, an organism is a complex aggregate of matter, in which permanent structural and functional differentiations and integrations are rendered possible by the fact that it continually receives about as much motion as it expends. Now a state in which expended motion is continually supplied from without, is called a state of *dependent moving equilibrium*. In other words, it is a state in which every change in the distribution of external forces must be met by a change in the distribution of internal forces, in order that the equilibrium may be preserved. This is the case with every organism. Its life is a perpetual balancing of external forces by internal forces. And the complete accomplishment of this end requires also that there shall be a continuous internal equilibration,—a perpetual balancing of forces operative in the different parts of the organism. Thus the career of an organism, or of a group of organisms, consists of two kinds of equilibration, which we may briefly designate as external and internal equilibration. And a moment's consideration will show us that each of these kinds of equilibration may be either direct or indirect. The adjustment of a group of organisms to changing external circumstances is effected partly by such direct adaptations as we have above considered, partly by the destruction of all those members of the group which do not become directly adapted. In this latter way equilibrium is maintained indirectly; and natural selection, or survival of the fittest, may be accurately characterized as "indirect equilibration." Turning now to the

internal processes, we see that direct equilibration which consists in continually arranging all the units of the organism in accordance with their physiological polarities, exemplified alike in heredity and in correlation of growth. On the other hand the dwindling and final evanescence of organs which are disused, is due to the fact that the nutritive material is all needed by the other organs which are in constant use; and it may accordingly be regarded as an indirect method of preserving the internal equilibrium of the organism. The process of organic evolution may therefore be summarized as follows:

Equilibration	External	Direct	*Adaptation.*
		Indirect	*Natural Selection.*
	Internal	Direct	*Heredity.* / *Correlation of Growth.*
		Indirect	*Use and Disuse.*

Here we have a classification of agencies coextensive with our present knowledge of the subject, and sufficiently comprehensive to include such factors in the problem as may hereafter be discovered. Under one of these four sub-divisions every special process concerned in forwarding organic evolution must be included. For since it is admitted on all sides that specific change is due to the necessity for maintaining equilibrium between the organism and the environment, it follows that every process which results in the modification of species must be a process of adjustment or equilibration, either external or internal, direct or indirect. In the scientific treatment of the problem, there is room for much beside natural selection, but there is no room for *occultæ vires*, or pantheistic intelligences, or for "tendencies," save such as may be expressed as the unneutralized surplus of forces acting in a particular direction.

But we have now done something more than merely to classify the causes of organic evolution. In the act of classifying these, we have arrived at the law or formula

which expresses the chief characteristic of organic evolution. We have reached the all-important truth that the progress of life on the globe has been the continuous equilibration of the organism with its environment. We need now only go a step farther in order to obtain a formula which will not only express the distinguishing characteristic of Life itself, but will also serve as an immediate basis for our inquiries into the phenomena of mind and of society.

CHAPTER XIII.

LIFE AS ADJUSTMENT.

ONE of the cardinal propositions of Mr. Spencer's system of philosophy is the definition of Life, first published in 1855, in his "Principles of Psychology," but now transferred to the first volume of his "Principles of Biology." According to Mr. Spencer, the continuous maintenance of an equilibrium between the organism and its environment is the process in which life essentially consists. Life—including also intelligence as the highest known manifestation of life—is the continuous establishment of relations within the organism, in correspondence with relations existing or arising in the environment.[1] Out of the host of illustrations by which

[1] The full definition runs thus:—"Life is the definite combination of heterogeneous changes, both simultaneous and successive, in correspondence with external coexistences and sequences." This is incomparably the most profound and complete definition of Life that has ever been framed; and the chapter in which it is set forth and illustrated would alone entitle Mr. Spencer to a place among the greatest thinkers that have ever lived. The objection has indeed been raised, in metaphysical quarters, that this is a definition, not of Life, but of the circumstances or accidents in which Life is manifested. Concerning this objection, we may content ourselves with the following remarks by Mr. Lewes. Both Life and Mind, says Mr. Lewes, are *processes*. "Neither is a substance; neither is a force. To speak of Vitality as a substance would shock all our ideas; but many speak of it as a force. They might with equal propriety hold Mortality to be a force. What, then, is meant by Vitality, or vital forces? If the abstraction be resolved into its concretes, it will be seen that a certain process, or group of processes, is condensed into a simple expression, and the final result of this process is trans-

this formula is justified, it will be sufficient for our present purpose to select but one or two. "The stinging and contractile powers of a polyp's tentacle correspond to the sensitiveness and strength of the creatures serving it for prey. Unless that external change which brings one of these creatures in contact with the tentacle were quickly followed by those internal changes which result in the coiling and drawing up of the tentacle, the polyp would die of inanition. The fundamental processes of integration and disintegration within it would get out of correspondence with the agencies and processes without it; and the life would cease." So in higher animals, "every act of locomotion implies the expenditure of certain internal mechanical forces, adapted in amounts and directions to balance or out-balance certain external ones. The recognition of an object is impossible without a harmony between the changes constituting perception, and particular properties coexisting in the environment. Escape from enemies supposes motions within the organism, related in kind and rapidity to motions without it. Destruction of prey requires a particular combination of subjective actions, fitted in degree and succession to overcome a group of objective ones. And so with those countless automatic processes exemplified in works on animal instinct." And similarly, as will appear still more clearly when we come to treat especially of the evolution of intelligence, "the empirical generalization that guides the farmer in his rotation of crops, serves to bring his actions into concord with certain of the actions going on in plants and soil; and the rational deductions of the educated navigator who calculates his position at sea, constitute a series of mental acts by

posed from a resultant into an initial condition, the name given to the whole group of phenomena becomes the personification of the phenomena, and the *product* is supposed to have been the *producer*. In lieu of regarding vital actions as the dynamical results of their statical conditions, the actions are personified, and the personification comes to be regarded as indicating something independent of and antecedent to the concrete facts it expresses."—*Problems of Life and Mind*, vol. i. p. 110.

which his proceedings are conformed to surrounding circumstances."

We practically recognize the truth of this definition of life when we attempt to ascertain whether an animal is dead or alive by poking it with a stick. If it responds by motions of its own, we judge it to be alive; if it merely moves as the stick pushes it, we judge it to be dead. So we decide whether a tree is alive or dead by observing whether the increased supply of solar radiance in spring causes those internal motions which result in the putting forth of leaves. In these cases we recognize the truth "that the alteration wrought by some environing agency on an inanimate object does not tend to induce in it a secondary alteration, that anticipates some secondary alteration in the environment. But in every living body there is a tendency towards secondary alterations of this nature; and it is in their production that the correspondence consists."

This formula for vital phenomena is further illustrated and justified by the fact that the degree of life is low or high, according as the correspondence between internal and external relations is simple or complex, limited or extensive, partial or complete, imperfect or perfect. The lowest forms of life respond only to the simpler and more homogeneous changes which affect their total environment. The relations established within a plant answer only to the presence or absence of a certain quantity of light and heat, and to the chemical and hygrometric relations existing in the enveloping atmosphere and subjacent soil. In a polyp, besides general relations similar to these, certain more special relations are established in correspondence with the external existence of mechanical irritants; as when its tentacles contract on being touched. The increase of extension acquired by the correspondences as we ascend the animal scale, may be seen by contrasting the polyp, which can simply distinguish between soluble and insoluble matters,

or between opacity and translucence in its environment, with the keen-scented bloodhound, and the far-sighted vulture. And the increase of complexity may be appreciated by comparing the motions respectively gone through by the polyp on the one hand, and by the dog and vulture on the other, while securing and disposing of their prey. In the next chapter it will be shown that the advance from lower to higher forms of life consists in the orderly establishment of relations within the organism, answering to external relations of coexistence and sequence, that are continually more special, more remote in space and in time, and more heterogeneous; until at last we reach civilized man, whose intelligence responds to every variety of external stimulus, whose ordinary needs are supplied by implements of amazing complexity, and whose mental sequences may be determined by circumstances as remote as the Milky Way and as ancient as the birth of the Solar System.

When viewed under this aspect the phenomena of life and of intelligence are so similar that it is difficult to keep them separate in our series of illustrations. As we proceed to treat of psychology, we shall much better appreciate the importance of the truth which I am now expounding. Restricting ourselves here, as far as possible, to physiological illustrations, let us note that in any organism life continues just so long as relations in the environment are balanced by internal relations, and no longer. The difference in result between a jump from a horse-car and a jump from an express train running at full speed, depends simply on the difference in the ability of the contracting muscles to neutralize a small or a large quantity of arrested momentum. The motor energy with which the head is carried forward until it strikes the ground, is exactly the surplus of external force to which the organism has failed to oppose an internal force. If the resulting concussion of the brain is not so great as to induce instant death, but only causes inflamma-

tion, with temporary loss of consciousness, then the continuance of life will depend upon the ability of the molecular forces within the organism to bring about a redistribution of matter and motion which shall balance the sudden redistribution caused by the blow. Dynamical pathology regards all diseases as disturbances of the internal equilibrium of the organism, and recovery is the restoration of the equilibrium. The avoidance of danger is the coordination of certain actions in anticipation of more or less complex relations about to arise without. If disease and danger be successfully avoided, the death which ensues in old age is due to the diminished plasticity of the organism which renders it incapable of responding to external changes. As we saw when treating of the primary aspects of Evolution and Dissolution, the evolution of the body, even to the close of life, is characterized by the integration of its constituent matter, shown in the increasing proportion of solids to fluids which makes the bones brittle, the muscles stiff, and the nerves sluggish. Death from old age ensues just when the consequent molecular immobility has reached the point at which incident forces can no longer be balanced by internal rearrangements.

A paragraph will suffice for the exposition of this formula of life in connection with the general law of evolution. That the evolution of life upon the earth, beginning with innumerable jelly-like patches of protoplasm, like the monera discovered by Prof. Haeckel, and ending with more than two million species of plants and animals such as naturalists classify, has been a change from homogeneity to heterogeneity, will be denied by no one. Nor is it needful to repeat, save for form's sake, what was sufficiently illustrated in an earlier chapter,—that the higher forms are also those in which the various orders of integration are most completely exemplified. We need only to note that the continuous adjustment of the organism to its environment,

in which process we have seen that life consists, must necessitate both the differentiation of the organism and the integration or definite combination of the changes which constitute its activity. For as the life becomes higher the environment itself increases in heterogeneity as well as in extent. The environment of a fresh-water alga is, as Mr. Spencer remarks, limited to the ditch or pool in which the alga lives. The acaleph borne along on a wave of the sea has a much more homogeneous environment than the caterpillar which crawls over leaves; and the actions by which the caterpillar must "meet the varying effects of gravitation," are far more heterogeneous than the actions of the acaleph. In the case of the higher animals, not only is their environment extremely heterogeneous as consisting to a great extent of adjacent organisms which stand to them in the relations of enemies, competitors, or prey; but it also presents highly coordinated actions on the part of these organisms, which must be met by highly coordinated actions on the part of the former. Thus with the increase of the organism in heterogeneity, definiteness, and coherence, its environment increases in heterogeneity and presents more definite and coherent relations to which the organism must adjust itself. And in this way the heterogeneous, definite, and coherent activity of the organism is again enhanced. The corollary from this group of truths is one which will nearly concern us when we come to treat of the Evolution of Society: it is this,—the greater the amount of progress already made, the more rapidly must progress go on.

CHAPTER XIV.

LIFE AND MIND.

BEFORE we proceed to treat of psychical life as the continuous establishment of subjective relations that are in correspondence with environing objective relations, we must dispose of certain questions which have been raised by Comte and his disciples concerning the right of psychology to be regarded as an independent science. Part of Comte's plan for the renovation of philosophy was the rescuing of psychology from the exclusive control of metaphysicians. The manner in which he proposed to accomplish the rescue is only too briefly described: he simply denied *in toto* the claims of psychology to be regarded as an independent science. According to Comte there can be no science, worthy of the name, founded upon the observation and comparison of states of consciousness; and psychology must therefore be studied as a part of biology, by the aid solely of the methods used in biology. That is, the study of mind must be reduced to the study of nervous phenomena simply. It is easy to say that the inevitable outcome of this is the unqualified assertion of materialism. But as Comte himself never drew such an inference, and always protested energetically against materialism, as based upon illegitimate inferences from the study of nervous phenomena, it would

not be fair in us to draw the inference for him and then upbraid him with it. This kind of misrepresentation is dear to theologians, and we may contentedly leave them an entire monopoly of it. But worse remains behind. Having condemned psychological analysis as useless, Comte offers us in exchange the ludicrous substitute—Phrenology!

Of all the scientific blunders which Comte ever made, this was beyond question the one which has done most to injure his credit with competent scientific critics. Yet in fairness we must remember that Comte's ignorance of psychology was his weakest point, and that forty years ago, when the anatomy and physiology of the nervous system were in their infancy, the conception of dividing the grey surface of the cerebrum into thirty or more provinces, each the seat of a complex group of mental aptitudes, did not seem so absurd as it does now. In those days even Broussais, a first-class physiologist, adopted some of the leading doctrines of phrenology. Moreover the fundamental conception of Gall—which included the anatomical comparison of all animal brains, in connection with the study of the mental characteristics of animals—was a noble conception; though in working it out he showed himself lamentably ignorant of the plainest rules of induction. The purposes of our inquiry do not render it necessary for me to discuss the merits of a hypothesis which has long since ceased to be of any interest, save as an episode in the early history of physiological psychology. Those who wish to see the question treated critically may be referred to the works of Müller, Valentin, Wagner, Vulpian, Gratiolet, Longet, and especially of Lélut; to the appendix to Hamilton's "Lectures on Metaphysics"; to the chapter on Gall in Mr. Lewes's "History of Philosophy"; and to Mr. Bain's treatise on "The Study of Character."

It is not Comte's acceptance of phrenology, but his denial of psychology, which here concerns us. The former is merely a personal question, bearing upon Comte's scientific com-

petence; the latter is a question of general interest. We may note at the outset that many contemporary positivists differ from Comte on this point. It is generally agreed that a science may be founded, even if it has not already been founded, upon the observation and comparison of states of consciousness; though there is some disagreement as to the position of that science with reference to the other sciences. Mr. Lewes, for instance, misled by his general adherence to the Comtean classification of the sciences, regards psychology as a subdivision of biology, on the ground that the phenomena of consciousness are merely a special division of the phenomena of life. This is, in one sense, true; so true, indeed, as to be fatal to the conclusion which it is meant to support. For it may be said, with equal truth, that the phenomena of life are but a subdivision of the phenomena presented by the surface of our contracting and cooling planet; so that it might equally well be argued that biology is only a subdivision of geology. And again it may be said that geologic phenomena are only a subdivision of the general phenomena presented by the condensation of a nebula; so that geology is only a branch of astronomy. Yet it could hardly be said that psychology is a mere branch of astronomy; so that here we seem to have reached a *reductio ad absurdum.*

But by travelling back over the course, we shall get out of the difficulty, and not only see why psychology has as good a right as any other branch of inquiry to be ranked as an independent science, but also see why it must needs be partly founded upon an observation and comparison of states of consciousness. Let us then, having reached the primeval nebula, begin our journey backwards.

Our position is explained by the consideration that all the synthetic concrete sciences are but adjacent tracts of one general science,—Cosmology. "Practically, however, they are distinguishable as successively more specialized parts of

the total science—parts further specialized by the introduction of additional factors. The astronomy of the solar system is a specialized part of that general astronomy which includes our whole sidereal system; and becomes specialized by taking into account the revolutions and rotations of planets and satellites. Geology is a specialized part of this special astronomy; and becomes specialized by joining with the effects of the earth's molar motions, the effects of continuous decrease in its internal molecular motion, and the effects of the molecular motion radiated from the sun. Biology is a specialized part of geology, dealing with peculiar aggregates of peculiar chemical compounds formed of the earth's superficial elements—aggregates which, while exposed to these same general forces molar and molecular, also exert certain general actions and reactions on one another. And psychology is a specialized part of biology, limited in its application to a higher division of these peculiar aggregates, and occupying itself exclusively with those special actions and reactions which they display, from instant to instant, in their converse with the special objects, animate and inanimate, amid which they move."[1]

This last point is one which requires further illustration. Concisely expressed, it amounts to this—that psychology is distinguished by dealing in a particular way with the relations between the organism and its environment. A few illustrations will render this perfectly intelligible; will show us that mere nervous physiology is not, and never can be, psychology.

Nervous physiology treats of relations subsisting within the organism. It explains how waves of molecular motion, set up in a nerve-centre and transmitted along a nerve-axis, cause contraction in the fibres of a muscle, or secretion in a gland, or molecular rearrangement in the substance of the tissues, or sets up a new molecular undulation in some other

[1] Spencer, *Principles of Psychology*, vol. i. pp. 137, 138.

nerve-centre. It seeks to formulate the conditions under which nervous stimulation and nervous discharge take place. Or it shows how certain feelings are invariably sequent upon certain rearrangements of the molecules composing the nerve-substance. Even if it recognizes, as it does continually recognize, some force external to the organism, which causes the molecular rearrangement and the resultant feeling, it nevertheless does not concern itself with the relation between the external cause and the internal effect, but only with the internal effect.

Now, as Mr. Spencer has forcibly pointed out, "so long as we state facts of which all the terms lie within the organism, our facts are anatomical or physiological, and in no degree psychological. Even though the relation with which we are dealing is that between a nervous change and a feeling, it is still not a psychological relation so long as the feeling is regarded merely as connected with the nervous change, and not as connected with some existence lying outside the organism. . . . For that which distinguishes psychology from the sciences on which it rests, is, that each of its propositions takes account both of the connected internal phenomena and of the connected external phenomena to which they refer. In a physiological proposition an inner relation is the essential subject of thought; but in a psychological proposition an outer relation is joined with it as a coessential subject of thought. A relation in the environment rises into coordinate importance with a relation in the organism. The thing contemplated is now a totally different thing. It is not the connection between the internal phenomena, nor is it the connection between the external phenomena; but it is *the connection between these two connections.* A psychological proposition is necessarily compounded of two propositions, of which one concerns the subject and the other concerns the object; and cannot be expressed without the four terms which these two propositions imply. The distinction may be best

explained by symbols. Suppose that A and B are two related manifestations in the environment—say, the colour and taste of a fruit; then, so long as we contemplate their relation by itself, or as associated with other external phenomena, we are occupied with a portion of physical science. Now suppose that X and Y are the sensations produced in the organism by this peculiar light which the fruit reflects, and by the chemical action of its juice on the palate; then, so long as we study the action of the light on the retina and optic centres, and consider how the juice sets up in other centres a nervous change known as sweetness, we are occupied with facts belonging to the science of physiology. But we pass into the domain of psychology the moment we inquire how there comes to exist within the organism a relation between X and Y that in some way or other corresponds to the relation between A and B. Psychology is exclusively concerned with this connection between A B and X Y: it has to investigate its nature, its origin, and its meaning."[1]

It is true, as the last chapter showed us, that biology also presupposes a reference to phenomena outside the organism, the very definition of Life being "the continuous adjustment of internal relations to external relations"; so that Mind here appears to be but the highest form of Life. We see here the difficulty of sharply demarcating adjacent provinces of nature. Nevertheless there is a broad distinction, though not a sharp one. Exclude from biological problems all those adjustments which constitute mental reaction upon the environment, and the only external factors remaining are those general conditions of temperature, moisture, food and the like, which are taken for granted once for all. While in each special problem of psychology, the relation between internal and external relations is the main subject of inquiry; on the other hand in special problems of biology, the relation between the internal processes and these general external

[1] Spencer, *Principles of Psychology*, vol. i. p. 132.

factors is not the chief, but a subordinate, subject of inquiry. Digestion, for instance, implies food; and "food implies neighbouring plants or animals; but this implication scarcely enters into our study of digestion, unless we ask the quite special question—how the digestive organs become fitted to the materials they have to act upon." But a moment's introspection will make it clear to everyone, "that he cannot frame any psychological conception without looking at internal coexistences and sequences in their adjustments to external coexistences and sequences. If he studies the simplest act of perception, as that of localizing a touch in some part of his skin, the indispensable terms of his inquiry are:—on the one hand a thing (1) and a position (2), both of which he regards as objective; and on the other hand a sensation (3), and a state of consciousness constituting his apprehension of position (4), both of which he regards as subjective. Or, if he takes for his problem one of his complex sentiments, as that of justice, he cannot represent to himself this sentiment, or give any meaning to its name, without calling to mind actions and relations supposed to exist in the environment: neither this nor any other emotion can be aroused in consciousness even vaguely, without positing something beyond consciousness to which it refers."[1]

Let us observe, in passing, that these considerations are quite incompatible with Materialism. The doctrine of the materialists rests partly on the assumption that the study of the laws of nervous action can give us a complete account of mental phenomena. But we have seen that to understand the simplest act of perception, we must take into the account not only the subjective and the objective factors, but the relation between the two. It is this relation which constitutes the perception. But this relation exists only in consciousness, and we cannot explain it save by direct observation of consciousness. Push our researches in biology as far as

[1] Spencer, *Principles of Psychology*, vol. i. p. 133.

we may, the most we can ever ascertain is that certain nerve-changes succeed certain other nerve-changes or certain external stimuli in a certain definite order. But all this of itself can render no account of the simplest phenomenon of consciousness. As Mr. Spencer well says, "such words as *ideas, feelings, memories, volitions*, have acquired their several meanings through self-analysis, and the distinctions we make between sensations and emotions, or between automatic acts and voluntary acts, can be established only by comparisons among, and classifications of, our mental states. The thoughts and feelings which constitute a consciousness, and are absolutely inaccessible to any but the possessor of that consciousness, form an existence that has no place among the existences with which the rest of the sciences deal. Though accumulated observations and experiments have led us by a very indirect series of inferences to the belief that mind and nervous action are the subjective and objective faces of the same thing, we remain utterly incapable of seeing, and even of imagining, how the two are related. Mind still continues to us a something without any kinship to other things."

Thus we conclude that psychology—though, from the objective point of view, it may be regarded as a branch of biology in the same abstract sense in which biology may be regarded as a branch of geology, and geology as a branch of astronomy—has nevertheless an equal claim with any of these to be ranked as a distinct science. From the subjective point of view it has a superior claim to any of the others. Since here the phenomena studied are directly given in the consciousness of the investigator, there arises a distinction more fundamental than those by which the various departments of objective science are marked off from each other. And, indeed, without some of the data furnished by this unique subjective science, it is impossible to obtain the premises of philosophy; as will at once be admitted, on

recollecting the topics which occupied us in the first part of this work. Psychology is therefore distinct alike from biology and from other sciences, in its problems and in its theorems. The problem of biology is to formulate the laws of nutrition and reproduction, muscular contraction and nervous irritation, heredity and adaptation. The problem of psychology is to formulate the laws of Association,—the order in which certain relations among environing phenomena give rise to certain corresponding relations among our states of consciousness. And while the theorems of objective science in general are based upon the observation of objective phenomena, whether external or internal to the organism; the theorems of psychology are based not only upon the observation of objective phenomena, but also upon the observation of subjective states.

In view of these results, we see how hopelessly Comte went astray. Rejecting all introspection as metaphysical and delusive, he would have had us confine our inquiries to the succession of those nervous phenomena which are the invariable concomitants of feelings, ignoring the fact that without introspective observation we can never even ascertain that there *is* any invariable concomitance between the feelings and the nervous phenomena. He would have us solve a problem in which two factors are concerned, by investigating only one factor.

In giving his reasons for thus rejecting all observation of consciousness, Comte reveals his inability (upon which I have already frequently remarked) to distinguish between psychology and metaphysics. He insists that psychologic inquiry, as hitherto conducted, has not resulted in discovery. If this were true, it would not help his case. Metaphysical psychologists have failed in discovery, not because they have directly examined states of consciousness, but because they have constructed unverifiable hypotheses about the nature of Mind in itself. Where they have abstained from ontological

inquiries, and have contented themselves with scientific methods, psychologists have made discoveries. To say nothing of such recent inquirers as Bain, Wundt, Fechner, and Taine, it may be fairly claimed that, among older speculators, Hobbes, Locke, Leibnitz, Berkeley, Hume, Kant, and Hartley, have by psychologic analysis made real and permanent contributions to our knowledge of mental operations. And at the very date when Comte was preparing his great treatise for publication, there appeared a remarkable book which, by establishing some of the fundamental laws of Association, went far toward placing psychology upon a scientific basis. It is not to the crude and superficial Gall, as Comte would have us believe, that we must give the respect due to the founder of scientific psychology: that respect is due, in far greater degree, to James Mill, the illustrious author of the "Analysis of the Human Mind."

Nevertheless, while psychology is a science clearly distinct from biology, dealing with phenomena which may be classed as super-organic, and using introspective observation as one of its main implements of inquiry, it is no more than any other an absolutely independent science. Since the phenomena of Mind are never manifested to us save in connection with the phenomena of Life, and since the same general formula expresses the fundamental characteristics of the two groups of phenomena, it follows that no complete science of psychology can be constituted without the aid of biology. The conclusions reached by the analysis of subjective states must be shown to be in harmony with the conclusions reached by the synthesis of objective phenomena, before the scientific interpretation of Mind can be regarded as entirely satisfactory. The force of this statement becomes at once apparent, when we recollect that introspective observation can inform us only concerning the mental processes which go on in adult civilized men. In order to understand the genesis of these mental processes, we need the assistance of

objective psychology and of nervous physiology; we need to compare the mental processes observed in adult civilized men, with the mental processes observed or inferred in civilized children, in adult barbarians, and in the lower animals, down to those humble organisms in which the phenomena of intelligence first become differentiated from the phenomena of organic life. The immense advance which has been made in mental science during the past forty years, has been mainly due to the practical recognition of this fact. Treatises on psychology are no longer solely based upon an analysis of what happens when "I see the inkstand," although analyses of this sort are still, as is here maintained, indispensable. The nervous system, in its ascending complications from the amphioxus to man, is now taken into the account. The normal variations in psychical manifestation, in the various human races, from childhood to old age, are taken into the account. The abnormal variations caused by stimulants and narcotics, as well as those exhibited in epilepsy, insanity, and other forms of nervous disease, are taken into the account. And careful investigations into the ways in which different organisms respond to external stimuli, show us that the lower forms of psychical activity are no longer neglected. While the analysis of complex mental operations has been pushed to an extent which until lately would have been deemed impracticable, on the other hand the sub-science of psychogeny, dealing with the origin of the various manifestations of mental activity, has arisen to coordinate importance with subjective psychology. It has become generally recognized that—ineffaceable as is the distinction between the phenomena of consciousness and all other phenomena—nevertheless the one as well as the other can be scientifically explained, only when present manifestations are studied in their connection with past manifestations. In this domain, as in all others, the Law of Evolution holds sway.

Let us now, in accordance with these general considerations, begin by contemplating the phenomena of Mind as gradually differentiated from the phenomena of Life; reserving for another chapter the interpretation of sundry psychological truths in terms of the law of evolution. And first let us reconsider the definition of life which was briefly illustrated in the preceding chapter. We saw that life essentially consists in the continuous adjustment of relations within the organism to relations in the environment. And we saw that the degree of life is low or high, according as the correspondence between internal and external relations is limited or extensive, partial or complete, simple or complex. We saw that the lowest forms of life respond to the changes going on about them only in a simple, imperfect, and general way. A tree, for instance, meeting by changes within itself none but physical and chemical changes which occur with general uniformity in the environment, exhibits life in a very simple and unobtrusive form. We habitually regard it as less alive than a polyp, because the polyp, by displaying nascent sensitiveness and contractility, responds to a greater variety of more special external stimuli. Yet the polyp, possessing no specialized organs of sense, can oppose but one sort of action to many diverse kinds of impression. Phenomena so different as those of light and heat, sound and mechanical impact, can affect it in but one or two ways,—by causing it to move, or by slightly altering its chemical condition. The modes of response to outer relations are few and homogeneous. Passing abruptly to civilized man, at the other end of the animal scale, we find a different state of things. To each kind of external stimulus there are many possible modes of response. Not only, for example, does the human organism sharply distinguish between variations which affect the eye and those which affect the ear; not only do eye and ear, which are themselves organs of amazing complexity, discern an endless number of differing tones and

hues, as well as a great variety of intensities and qualities; but each particular manifestation of sound or of light is capable of arousing in the organism very different psychical combinations, entailing different muscular actions, according to circumstances. Tennyson's traveller, who, walking at nightfall in a strange land, hears the moaning of a distant sea,

> "And knows not if it be thunder, or a sound
> Of rocks thrown down, or one deep cry
> Of great wild beasts,"

will adopt a course of action more or less in conformity with environing relations, according to the degree of his sagacity and the extent of his experience. Streaks of light and strata of cloud in the horizon will lead the practised mariner and the unskilled passenger to different conclusions. A cartoon of Raphael or a symphony of Beethoven will excite different emotions in an artist and in a person of feeble impressibility. And from the swinging of a cathedral lamp the young Galileo drew inferences which had escaped the attention or baffled the penetration of thousands of less acute beholders. Thus, with civilized man, the modes of response to outer relations are almost infinitely numerous and heterogeneous.

But now, in this briefly indicated contrast between the lowest and highest extremes of life, regarded as a correspondence between the organism and the environment, we have passed abruptly from vital relations which are purely physical to vital relations which are almost purely psychical. The relations contemplated have been, in each of the instances, relations internally set up in adjustment to external relations. But while the relations set up within the tree are simply physico-chemical; and while the relations set up within the polyp, though involving nascent sensitiveness, are nevertheless, in the absence of specialized nerve-matter, unattended by consciousness, and therefore cannot strictly be classed as psychical; on the other hand, the relations set up within

civilized man are almost purely psychical, involving only such physico-chemical elements as are necessitated by the fact that conscious activity does not go on unattended by molecular changes in nerve-tissue. It appears, therefore, that while in the vegetal world, and in the lower regions of the animal world, the life is purely or almost purely physico-chemical, it becomes more and more predominantly psychical as we ascend in the animal world, until at the summit it is mainly psychical. The continuous adjustment of inner to outer relations, which both constitutes life and maintains it from moment to moment, is a process which, at first purely physiological, becomes ever more distinctly psychological.

From the facts of comparative anatomy we may elicit a parallel truth. In standard works on human anatomy it is customary to distinguish between the *vegetative* organs, (comprising the nutritive and reproductive systems,) which are developed from the endoderm of the embryo, and the *animal* organs, (comprising the nervo-muscular system,) which are developed from the ectoderm. Not unfrequently these are otherwise and more appropriately distinguished as the *nutritive* and *relational* systems; the special office of the former being the integration of nutritive material, in behoof either of the organism or of its derivative offspring, while the special office of the latter is the maintenance of relations between the organism and the environment. The demarcation is thoroughly distinct, but it is not absolute; since the relations each moment set up even in the nutritive system must correspond with certain general relations of air, temperature, and assimilable material in the environment. Now we have to note that in the vegetal world such general correspondences are all that are established; there is no system of organs differentiated for the purpose of maintaining an equilibrium of relations with the environment. In such simply organized animals as the polyp there is no differentiation of relational tissues or organs; but the entire surface of

the animal, besides maintaining such general correspondences as characterize vegetal life, exhibits in a slight degree the irritability and contractility which in higher creatures are specialized in those tissues which form the relational organs. In the molluscoida, the property of irritability being localized in a few nerve-threads uniting in ganglionic masses, and the property of contractility being specialized in a parallel manner, there is rendered possible that more special mode of response to environing agencies, known as reflex action. In the lower vertebrata, the integration of numerous adjacent ganglia into a medulla, having connections with various parts of the organism, renders possible a much more perfectly coordinated series of responses to external stimuli. And at the same time the development of a pair of pedunculated ganglia from the upper portion of the medulla, is attended by the ability to compound the impressions which the medulla receives; so that it becomes possible for the correspondences to extend in space and time. As we ascend through the vertebrate sub-kingdom, the growth of these pedunculated ganglia—the cerebrum and cerebellum—becomes more and more the predominant characteristic of the nervous system; and at the same time the power of adjusting inner relations to remote, special, and complex relations increases. Finally when we come to man, in whom the correspondences have reached a marvellous degree of heterogeneity, extent, and definiteness, we find not only that the relational system of organs is the dominant fact in his organization, but also that the system of pedunculated cephalic ganglia is the dominant fact in the relational system of organs. Not only is the nutritive life quite subordinated to the specially relational life, but the lower modes of the relational life, such as reflex action and instinct, are quite subordinated to those higher modes, such as thought and emotion, which are made possible by the great extent to which the cerebrum and cerebellum carry the compounding of impressions received in the medulla. In

order to realize with vividness how completely human life has come to mean the higher psychical life, let us try to imagine what life would be without the cerebrum and cerebellum. Yet from the biological point of view these systems of ganglia, though nearly, are not quite, absolutely essential to human life; since the less complex acts and impressions are still coordinated after they have been destroyed by disease, and since infants, born without any brain save the medulla and basal ganglia, have been known to live for a short time. Such a deprivation of the higher relational activities naturally seems to us almost equivalent to deprivation of life.

We may now more thoroughly appreciate the force of the distinction between the provinces of biology and of psychology, which was stated in the earlier part of this chapter. We see that while life, physical and psychical, is the continuous adjustment of inner to outer relations, nevertheless in the lowest forms of life, unaccompanied by mind, the outer relations to which adjustment is made are exceedingly general, and the correspondence is simple, direct and homogeneous. But as we pass to forms somewhat higher, we find, along with this simple correspondence maintained by the whole organism, a number of more complex, indirect, and special correspondences, for the establishment and maintenance of which there is differentiated a particular relational structure. As the correspondence increases in complexity, in indirectness, and in speciality, the maintenance of it is confined more and more to this specialized nervo-muscular structure; and the enormously heterogeneous series of adjustments which eventually goes on becomes distinguished from the relatively homogeneous series of adjustments which has all along been going on, as psychical life in contrast with physical life. Thus by a regular process of evolution it happens that, while at the outset the psychical life is but a slight extension of the correspondence which constitutes the physical life, at the end the correspondence which con-

stitutes the psychical life is all in all, and the processes of physical life come to be regarded as entirely subordinate to the maintenance of this higher correspondence.

Let us now briefly trace the various extensions and complications of the correspondence as it becomes more heterogeneous, definite, and coherent. Scanty justice can here be done to the subject, since it is necessary for me to compress into half-a-dozen pages the substance of a series of illustrations, which in Mr. Spencer's exceedingly condensed exposition fill a hundred pages. Nevertheless a few striking facts may be noted down, which will serve to assist in the comprehension of the process. Let us first note that in the simplest forms of life the correspondence extends "only to external relations which have one or both terms in contact with the organism. The processes going on in the yeast-plant cease unless its cell-wall is bathed by the saccharine and other matters on whose affinities they depend. . . . And so too among the lowest animals, the substances to be assimilated must come in collision with the organism before any correspondence between inner and outer changes is shown." The correspondence is similarly limited in time. The tree, which puts forth its leaves from year to year, does so only in response to luminous and thermal changes which occur contemporaneously. The polyp's tentacles contract only in response to immediately present stimuli. "Alike in all these forms of life, there is an absence of that correspondence between internal relations and *distant* external relations"—in space and time—which we see exhibited in higher forms.

Now the extension of the correspondence in space is effected by the gradual differentiation of organs of sense. One of the most notable achievements of modern biology is the discovery—due among others, to Huschke, Remak, Milne-Edwards, and Huxley—that all the sense-organs are but successive modifications of tactile structures, or rather, of those simple dermal structures which in the higher

organisms are specialized as tactile. The most perfect organs of touch are the *vibrissæ* or whiskers of the cat, which act as long levers in communicating impulses to the nerve-fibres that terminate in clusters about the dermal sacs in which they are inserted. Yet these whiskers are merely specialized forms of just such hairs as those which cover the bodies of most mammals, and which are found evanescent upon the human skin, embedded in minute sacs or re-entrant folds. Now it is a demonstrated fact that the eye and ear are morphologically identical with *vibrissæ*. The bulb of the eye and the auditory chamber are nothing but extremely-metamorphosed hair-sacs, and the same is true of the olfactory chamber. The crystalline lens is a differentiated hair, the aqueous and vitreous humours are liquefied dermal tissue, and the otolites of the ear are "concretions from the contents of an epidermic sac." In view of these astounding disclosures of embryology, we may readily assent to Mr. Spencer's statement that modern science justifies the guess of Demokritos, "that all the senses are modifications of touch." From a single sense, more or less diffused over the surface of the body, and capable of establishing correspondences only with agencies in direct contact with the body, there have arisen, by slow differentiations, such localized senses as sight and hearing, which serve to enlarge the environment and establish correspondences with agencies more and more remote. Let us briefly consider the sense of sight, omitting hearing, as well as smell and taste, since our space is too limited to deal with them properly.

In such lowly organized creatures as the hydra the ability to distinguish between light and darkness, or between sunshine and shadow, is possessed in a slight degree by the entire surface of the body. But vision can hardly be said to exist, even in its most rudimentary aspect, until this sensibility is "concentrated in a particular spot. The rudimentary eye consisting, as in a planaria, of some pigment

grains, may be considered as simply a part of the surface more irritable by light than the rest. Some idea of the impression it is fitted to receive may be formed by turning our closed eyes towards the light, and passing the hand backwards and forwards before them." But while this localization of sensibility enables the creature to adapt itself to the movements of neighbouring opaque bodies, the extension of the correspondence is nevertheless very slight. To produce noticeable obscuration the opaque object must approach very near; and hence "we may infer that nascent vision extends to those objects alone which are just about to touch the organism, ... so that it amounts at first to little more than anticipatory touch."[1] As we pass to higher forms, we find the eye gradually increasing in translucence, acquiring convexity of surface, liquefying internally into refracting humours, while the nerve-vesicles within multiply and arrange themselves as retinal rods; the result being seen in the gradually increasing power of the organism to adapt its actions to actions occurring at a distance. The process and the result of development are essentially the same in the case of hearing and smell, though there are great differences in the degrees to which these senses are developed in the highest animals.

Further extension of the correspondence is effected, in the higher vertebrates, by the increase in size and complexity of the cerebrum and cerebellum. These pedunculated groups of ganglia, which issue from the medulla, and whose function it is to compound in higher and higher aggregates the already-compound impressions received by the medulla, are capable of adjusting inner relations to outer relations beyond the reach of the organs of sense. "Chased animals that make their way across the country to places of refuge out of view, are obviously led by combinations of past and present impressions which enable them to transcend the sphere of the

[1] Spencer, *Principles of Psychology*, vol. i. pp. 314, 315.

senses." And in man, by the aid of science, the correspondence is extended not only over the entire surface of the earth, but through all visible space; witness the facts that telegraphic reports enable purchasers in New York to adapt their actions to prices in London, and that the inferences of astronomers are modified in accordance with chemical changes going on in remote nebulæ.

Along with the extension of the correspondence in space there goes on an extension in time, resulting in an enormous increase of the psychical life. Under their more simple forms the two kinds of extension go on together. The rudimentary eye, which enables the organism to anticipate the contact of an approaching opaque body, may serve to illustrate the primitive connection between adjustments to external co-existences and adjustments to external sequences. And it is obvious, without concrete illustration, that in general the more remote are the outer relations to which inner relations are adjusted, the longer will be the interval by which the adjustment may be made to anticipate the group of outer relations which it is designed to balance. But it is only in the higher vertebrates, whose cephalic ganglia are sufficiently large and complex to enable them to form ideal representations of outer relations not immediately present, that there is witnessed a decided extension of the correspondence in time. Dogs and foxes exhibit a well-marked anticipation of future events, in hiding food to be eaten hereafter. But it is first in the human race that such foresight becomes highly conspicuous; and the difference between civilized and savage men in this respect is probably even more marked than the difference between savage men and the higher allied mammals. There are strong reasons for believing that the more complex correspondences in time are chiefly effected by the cerebrum, while the more complex correspondences in space are chiefly effected by the cerebellum. And if this be the case, we may understand why it is that in the course of

human progress the increase of the cerebrum in size and complexity has been so much greater than the increase of the cerebellum. In no other respect is civilized man so widely distinguished from the savage, as in his habitual adjustment of his daily actions to contingencies likely to arise in a more or less distant future. But here we touch upon an important theorem of sociology, which I shall hereafter consider at greater length.

Next let us note that the extension of the correspondence in space and in time is accompanied by a progressive increase in the speciality of the correspondence. Manifestly the differentiation of sense-organs which renders possible the adjustment of inner relations to distant outer relations, also renders possible the adjustment of inner relations to outer relations that are more and more special. Increased width of retina enhances the power of estimating the size of neighbouring objects, since the differences in the visual areas which they occupy will become more clearly appreciable. The multiplication of retinal rods enhances the power of estimating shape, since differently shaped objects affect different numbers and different combinations of these rods. Thus while animals with rudimentary vision, in becoming aware of the presence of approaching objects, can recognize them only as objects, on the other hand an animal with developed vision, in recognizing objects near or distant, can also distinguish between innumerable differences in their sizes and shapes, and can make a proportionally great number of special adaptations in its conduct. It is similar with the ability to distinguish colours, and to estimate direction by the eye. And from the growing heterogeneity of the other senses, we might draw parallel illustrations, were there room for them. Finally the high development of the cephalic ganglia, rendering possible the compounding of ideal representations of objects and relations not present to sense, increases to an enormous degree the speciality of the adjust-

ments. Such special adjustments are seen in the cases of "the lion that goes to the river-side at dusk to lie in wait for creatures coming to drink, and the house-dog standing outside the door in expectation that some one will presently open it." But the increase in speciality of adjustment is most conspicuously exemplified in the progress of the human race; as is seen by contrasting the savage who sharpens his arrows in expectation of the periodic flight of certain birds, with the astronomer who at a given day, hour, and minute, adjusts his telescope to watch a transit of Venus.

In the life of the highest animals, and especially in the life of the human race, characterized as it is by the predominant activity of the great cephalic ganglia, there is witnessed an increase in the generality of the correspondence, parallel with the increase in speciality. As this topic falls almost entirely within the province of sociology, the illustration of it must be reserved for a future chapter. Let it here suffice to recall the fact, already mentioned, (Part I. Chap. viii.,) that the progress of human knowledge has all along been equally characterized by analysis and by synthesis,—by the differentiation implied in the recognition of relations that are more and more special, as well as by the integration implied in the grouping of relations in classes that are more and more general.

Along with the increase of the correspondence in spatial and temporal remoteness, in speciality and in generality, there is a continuous increase in complexity. Indeed, in the various aspects of psychical progress already contemplated, this aspect has been continually illustrated. Obviously the development of sense-organs, while widening the environment and increasing the number of relations to which the organism may adjust itself, enhances also the complexity of the adjustments. Contrast the simple movements of the planaria when an opaque object passes before its rudimentary eye, with the complex movements of a cat when a mouse is

heard scratching in the wainscot, and it becomes evident that the heterogeneity of the impressions received by an organism is paralleled by the heterogeneity of the adjustments by which it responds to them. The multiplication of the objects and relations of which any organism can take cognizance, involves of necessity a growing complexity in the actions by which it adapts itself to their presence. In civilized man, whose immensely developed cephalic ganglia bear witness to the predominance of psychical over physical life, this correlated advance in heterogeneity of correspondence is exemplified in the interdependent progress of science and art. Here again we are carried into the domain of sociology, and this thread must be left to be gathered up with the others when we come to treat of intellectual progress.

It remains to note that the extension of the correspondence in space and time, and its increase in definite heterogeneity, both heighten the degree of life and add to the ability to maintain life. On the one hand, the more numerous, the more complicated, and the more clearly defined, are the outer relations to which the organism adapts itself, and the longer the interval of time by which the adjustments may be made to forestall external contingencies, the greater will be the number of heterogeneous changes in which life consists. And on the other hand, the greater the number of heterogeneous changes by which the organism can respond to outer changes, the more easily and surely will life be prolonged. Whence, says Mr. Spencer, "we may clearly see how life and ability to maintain life, are two sides of the same fact—how life is a combination of processes, the result of whose workings is their own continuance." An interesting commentary on this proposition is furnished by Mr. Lankester's recently-published essay on "Comparative Longevity," in which it is shown that high *individuation*, or the power of responding heterogeneously to external changes, is the chief, though not the sole, factor concerned in producing length

of life. The amount of normal longevity in any species depends upon the definite heterogeneity of the adaptation of its individual members to environing circumstances, and also upon the ratio of their nutrition to their expenditure. But the preponderant importance of the former factor is seen in the fact that, in spite of their immensely greater personal expenditure, the higher animals are, as a rule, very much longer lived than the lower ones. In the civilized human races also, as contrasted with the savage races, the life is not only higher in degree but longer in duration: the longevity of the lowest savages rarely exceeds forty-five years.

As we proceed to survey, in a single view, the various truths here separately elucidated, we find that the essential distinction, above insisted on, between the sciences of biology and psychology, is thoroughly justified by the very facts which illustrate the close connection between the two. The foregoing exposition conclusively proves that in dealing with the adjustments of inner to outer actions, biology "limits itself to the few in which the outer actions are those of agents in actual contact with the organism—food, aerated medium, and things which produce certain effects by touch (as insects which fertilize flowers); thus leaving to psychology all other adjustments of inner to outer actions." "The moment we rose to a type of creature which adjusts certain organic relations to relations of which both terms are not presented to its surface, we passed into adjustments of the psychological order. As soon as there exists a rudimentary eye capable of receiving an impression from a moving object about to strike the organism, and so rendering it possible for the organism to make some adapted movement, there is shown the dawn of actions which we distinguish as intelligent. As soon as the organism, feebly sensitive to a jar or vibration propagated through its medium, contracts itself so as to be in less danger from the adjacent

source of disturbance, we perceive a nascent form of the life classed as psychical. That is to say, whenever the correspondence exhibits some extension in space or in time, some increase of speciality or complexity, we find we have crossed the boundary between physical life and psychical life."[1]

[1] Spencer, *Principles of Psychology*, vol. i. p. 392.

CHAPTER XV.

THE COMPOSITION OF MIND.

In pursuing the analysis of a complex series of phenomena, with the object of ascertaining the simple ultimate elements of which the complex series is made up, we shall sometimes most satisfactorily accomplish our purpose if we begin with the most complicated cases which the series presents. After explaining these by resolving them into their less complex components, our analysis "must proceed similarly with these components; and so, by successive decompositions, must descend to the simpler and more general, reaching at last the simplest and most general." Let us proceed, after this fashion, to inquire into the Composition of Mind. Beginning with the most highly-involved operations of conscious intelligence, and neglecting, for the time being, the consideration of those emotional states by which all operations of intelligence are to a greater or less degree accompanied, let us pursue our analysis until we have arrived at those ultimate units of feeling in the manifold compounding of which all conscious operations, whether intellectual or emotional, consist.

Beginning, then, with a somewhat complicated operation of intelligence, let us consider the process by which an astronomer, knowing the dimensions of the earth, is enabled to calculate thereform the distance of the moon. He must, in

the first place, assimilate in thought the case of the moon to like cases in which the distances of inaccessible objects upon the earth are indirectly measured. When a land-surveyor wishes to ascertain the distance of a church-tower situated on the farther side of a river, he has recourse to an indirect method of measurement. Upon his own side of the river he first measures the distance between two points sufficiently removed from each other, and this distance he calls a base-line. From each end of the base-line he now takes a sight at the inaccessible tower, and, with the proper instruments, measures the difference between its direction and the direction of the base-line. In this way he obtains an ideal triangle, of which the tower is the apex; and, knowing the length of the base-line, and the value of the two angles at the ends of the base-line he calculates by trigonometry the length of the two sides which express the distance of the tower from the ends of the base-line. Now, the astronomer, imitating this process, assumes as a base-line the known distance between two remote points on the earth's surface, as for example London and Cape Town; and then from each of these points he proceeds to take the bearings of the moon. The process, indeed, is here complicated by the fact that, owing to the long distance, the inequalities of the earth's surface, and its curvature, the observer at Cape Town cannot see the position of London, and *vice versâ*. It is necessary, therefore, again to resort to an indirect method, and, having measured the meridional bearings of the moon from the north-pole at London and from the south-pole at Cape Town, to compare these bearings with the knowledge that the bearing of the one pole from the other is 180 degrees or two right angles. A further correction must be made for the fact that London and Cape Town are not on the same meridian. But disregarding these steps in the process, as unnecessarily complicating our case, we have to note that, when the astronomer has thus indirectly measured the angles which ideal lines

drawn to the moon must make at the two ends of his long base-line from London to Cape Town, he is at once enabled, like the land-surveyor, to calculate by trigonometry the lengths of these ideal lines, and thus to ascertain the moon's distance. What, now, is the essential characteristic of the process which the astronomer goes through? Or, in other words, what is the fundamental psychical process by the manifold compounding of which is built up this highly-complex series of inferences?

From beginning to end, the fundamental process is the cognition of the equality of sundry relations. The thought which underlies and determines the whole calculation is the cognition that the relations between the sides and angles of a great triangle, having for its apex the moon, and for its base the chord of the arc of the meridian of London measured to a point in the southern hemisphere upon the same parallel with Cape Town, are equal to the relations between the sides and angles of a similar small triangle, having an inaccessible tower for its apex and a measured line of five or six rods for its base; and that these relations, in turn, are equal to the relations between the sides and angles of a still smaller and similar triangle which may be drawn on a sheet of paper, and of which the sides and angles may, if necessary, be directly measured. Now, this cognition implies the previous establishment, in the calculator's mind, of sundry cognitions of the equalities and inequalities of certain relations between the sides and angles of triangles. To show briefly how such cognitions have been established, let us cite the simplest case —that in which the two angles at the base of an isosceles triangle are recognized as equal to each other. Euclid establishes this point by supposing two similar and equal isosceles triangles, of which the one is turned over and placed upon the other, so that the apex and one side of the one will coincide with the apex and opposite side of the other. Then the other sides and the bases must respectively coincide,

otherwise the two triangles would not be similar and equal, and the conditions of the case would be violated. All the sides being thus equal, each to each, the two triangles must everywhere coincide, and consequently the two basal angles must be equal, both in the triangle which has been turned over and in the one which has kept its original position. Now, each step of this demonstration is a cognition of the equality of a pair of relations of length or of direction; and in each case this cognition is established, not by any anterior demonstration, but by direct inspection. Or, in other words, when it is said that two lines of equal length, starting from the same point, and running in the same direction, must coincide at their farther extremities, the truth of the statement is at once recognized *simply because the states of consciousness which we call the ideas of the two lines are totally indistinguishable from each other.* This immediate perception of the equality—or, in some cases, of the inequality—between two or more relations of position or magnitude is the goal toward which every geometrical demonstration tends. And, still more, it is the mental act implied in every step of every such demonstration. All the devices familiar to the reader of Euclid—the bisecting of lines and angles, the drawing of parallels and the circumscribing of circles for argumentative purposes—are simply devices for bringing a given pair of space-relations directly into consciousness, so that their equality or inequality may be recognized by direct inspection.

Manifestly the case is the same in that algebraic reasoning which our astronomer will often find it desirable to employ in the course of his computation of the moon's distance. The axiom that "relations which are equal to the same relation are equal to each other" is an axiom which twice involves the immediate recognition of the equality of two given relations. And, if any proof were needed that the whole science of algebra is based upon this axiom, it may be found in one of the most common algebraic artifices "When a

simplification may be thereby achieved, it is usual to throw any two forms of an equation into a proportion—a procedure in which the equality of the relations is specifically asserted." To cite Mr. Spencer's simple illustration: if we take any equation, $2\ xy=y^2$, and, dividing it by y, obtain a second equation, $2\ x=y$, the legitimacy of our proceeding is at once rendered apparent when the two equations are thrown together in a proportion, in which it is asserted that the ratio of $2\ xy$ to y^2 is equal to the ratio of $2\ x$ to y. Or, if any doubt still remain as to the correctness of this, we resort to the familiar device of multiplying extremes and means, and obtain the identical proposition $2\ xy^2=2\ xy^2$, in which the identity of the two terms is immediately cognized, because the states of consciousness which they evoke are indistinguishable from one another.

Thus the complicated quantitative reasoning by which an astronomer determines the distance of a heavenly body consists in the long-continued compounding of immediate cognitions of the equality or inequality of two or more given relations or groups of relations of position and magnitude.

Before proceeding to unfold all that is implied by this conclusion, let us consider another concrete example of a somewhat different kind. When a certain horned animal, of slender figure, with cloven hoofs, and a hairy integument, is presented to the inspection of a naturalist, he at once recognizes it as a giraffe; and, if required further to describe it, he observes that, as having four stomachs and chewing the cud, it belongs to the sub-order of ruminants; as having its toes firmly united in a solid hoof, it belongs to the order of ungulata; as having mammary glands and suckling its young, it belongs to the class of mammals; and, as having an internal bony skeleton, it belongs to the sub-kingdom of vertebrates. What, now, is the mental act which is repeated at each stage of this description? It is "a cognition of the fact that the relation between particular attributes in this

animal is like the relation between homologous attributes in certain other animals." To confine ourselves to the first clause of the description—"the attributes implied by the term *ruminant* can be known only as previously observed or described; and the predication of these, as possessed by the animal under remark, is the predication of attributes *like* certain before-known attributes. Once more, there is no assignable reason why, in this particular case, a relation of coexistence should be thought, between 'such attributes as the possession of four stomachs and the possession of horns and cloven hoofs,' unless as being *like* certain relations of coexistence previously known; and, whether the thinking of this relation can be otherwise accounted for or not, it is clear that the predication cannot otherwise have any probability, much less certainty."[1] The case is the same with the remaining clauses of the description. In each instance the mental operation performed by the naturalist is the recognition of the likeness between certain groups of relations observed in this giraffe and certain other groups of relations previously classified as pertaining to ruminants, ungulata, mammals, and vertebrates. Obviously, therefore, the reasoning by which the places of animals in the zoological scale are determined, consists in the compounding of cognitions of likeness or unlikeness between certain given groups of relations.

So far, then, the mental operation performed by the naturalist seems to be not unlike that performed by the astronomer. And indeed, in spite of the superficial difference which seems so widely to separate the classification of animals from the measurement of celestial spaces, it will appear, on a moment's reflection, that the only real difference between the mental processes involved in the former case, and those involved in the latter, is the extent to which *likeness* is predicated of the relations concerned. Deeply con-

[1] Spencer, *Principles of Psychology*, vol. ii. p. 69.

sidered, the act of the astronomer is the same as that of the naturalist, save that, while the former classifies together sundry groups of relations as *equal* to one another, or indistinguishable from one another, the latter classifies together sundry groups of relations as *like* one another, or but slightly distinguishable from one another. Now, in this statement we see that what is meant by *equality* is merely *exact likeness;* but something more is needed for the accurate description of the difference between the two cases. The objects which the astronomer contemplates are simple triangles, presenting simple relations of position and magnitude; while the objects contemplated by the naturalist are complex organisms, presenting immensely compounded relations of structure and function. Now, in speaking of simple things or simple relations, such as lengths and breadths, weights, times, and velocities, we habitually predicate *equality* or *inequality* of them. "Wherever the terms of the comparison, being both elementary, have only one aspect under which they can be regarded, and can be specifically posited as either distinguishable or indistinguishable, we call them either *unequal* or *equal.* But when we pass to complex things, exhibiting at once the attributes, size, form, colour, weight, texture, hardness—things which, if equal in some particulars, are rarely equal in all, and therefore rarely indistinguishable —then we use the term *like* to express, partly the approximate equality of the several attributes separately considered, and partly the grouping of them in a parallel manner in time and space. Similarly with the relations involved in reasoning. If simple, they are recognized as *equal* or *unequal;* if complex, as *like* or *unlike.*"

The essential difference, then, between the quantitative reasoning employed in the most advanced sciences, and the qualitative reasoning employed in those which are less advanced, may be thus stated: in the first case the relations contemplated are so simple that they may be directly juxta-

posed in consciousness, and recognized as *equal* or *unequal;* but in the second case the relations contemplated consist of so many simple relations heterogeneously combined, that they can only through a very indirect process be juxtaposed in consciousness, and hence are only approximately recognized as *like* or *unlike.* That this is the only essential difference between quantitative reasoning and qualitative reasoning is shown by the fact that all qualitative reasoning is vaguely quantitative, while all quantitative reasoning begins by being qualitative. For example—to cite Mr. Spencer's admirable illustration—when a brewer describes a vat of fermenting wort as containing carbonic acid, he makes a qualitative statement; yet some rude notion of quantity is involved in it. "He thinks of the carbonic acid as more, certainly, than a cubic foot; less, certainly, than the total capacity of the vat: the quantity is thought of as in some ratio to the quantity of wort." On the other hand, "a man who has walked a mile in fifteen minutes, and, observing that he has a quarter of a mile still to go, infers the time it will take to reach his destination, does not primarily infer *three minutes and three quarters:* he primarily infers *a short time*—a time indefinitely conceived as certainly less than ten minutes, and certainly more than one." Doubtless he may in an instant proceed to calculate the exact length of the time; yet, as it will not be denied that even before calculating he has a vague notion of the interval, it must be admitted that his inference, though ultimately quantitative, is, at the outset, only qualitative. Between the two kinds of reasoning, therefore, the only difference is the degree of definiteness to which they are respectively developed.

Bearing in mind these mutually harmonious conclusions—which alike imply the assertion that, between the highest and the lowest kinds of reasoning employed by civilized man, the difference consists solely in the complexity of the relations contemplated, and in the greater or less definiteness with

which these relations are cognized as equal or unequal, like or unlike—let us now advance a step farther. Already, in the course of the foregoing analysis, the essential similarity between reasoning and classification has been vividly brought before us. We have now to scrutinize this similarity somewhat more closely.

To cite an example with which we are already familiar: when our astronomer, some thirty years ago, observed that certain irregularities in the motions of Uranus still remained unaccounted for, after calculating the combined effects of all the interior planets in producing such irregularities, it occurred to him that the unexplained irregularities could only be due to the gravitative force of some undiscovered planet outside of Uranus; and the discovery of Neptune was the result of this most brilliant hypothesis. Now, the mental act involved in this deduction was essentially a *classification of cases.* The case of the unexplained perturbations was mentally ranked along with the several cases of explained perturbations presented by the solar system, as being similarly due to gravitative force; and to the number of known cases in which planets deflect each other from the regular paths in which they would otherwise move, a new hypothetical case was added. Comparing, now, this mental operation with that of the naturalist who, by virtue of certain observed likenesses of structure and function, ranks together lions, and elephants, and seals, in the class of mammals, we may conclude roughly that the one process consists in the formation of a group of *like cases,* while the other consists in the formation of a group of *like things.* And since by the expression "like cases" we mean merely "like sets of relations among two or more given groups of things," it follows that we may characterize Reasoning as the *classification of relations,* while Classification, ordinarily so called, is the *classification of things.* When, for example, on perceiving two similar triangles set side by side, we proceed to make some

inference from the known value of a side in the one to the desired value of the corresponding side in the other, the act is an act of reasoning. But when, on taking up two similar sea-shells, we recognize them in their totality as belonging to an oyster or some other familiar mollusk, the act is an act of classification, commonly so called. In other words, if the perception of similarity is followed by the thought of one or more of the like relations which make up similarity, we have an act of reasoning; but if it is followed by the thought of other objects presenting like relations of similarity to the one now perceived, we have an act of classification.

But, closely related as these two mental operations are now seen to be, we have not yet disclosed the full extent to which they are related. Not only is classification involved in every act of reasoning or inference, but reasoning or inference is involved in every act of classification. Not only does reasoning consist in the grouping of relations as like or unlike, but the classification of things can go on only through the grouping of relations as like or unlike. To illustrate this, let us take a further downward step, and consider a mental operation apparently much simpler than those hitherto treated. Let us consider what is implied by the perception of an object.

It is admitted on all sides that the perception of an object necessarily implies the *recognition* of the object as this or that, as like certain objects, and as unlike certain other objects. Every act of perception, therefore, involves classification. We cannot even name a chair without implying the existence of a group of objects which the chair resembles; and the essential element in the perception of a chair is not the reception of a group of visual or tactual impressions, but the interpretation of these impressions as like other antecedent impressions which, taken together, constitute the consciousness of the presence of a chair. And this is as

much an act of classification, as the act by virtue of which the naturalist would rank a newly-found horned and cloven-hoofed mammal among the ruminants; the only difference being that in ordinary perception the act has been performed so frequently as to have become automatic at an early period of life, while in scientific classification the act involves more or less conscious thinking, and comparison of relations.

Here, in this last clause, there is hinted what we are seeking for. Not only in scientific classification, but in ordinary perception also, there must go on a comparison of relations, and a grouping of them as like or unlike. In perceiving an apple, for example, "the bulk is perceived to be like the bulk of apples in general; the form like their forms; the colour like their colours; the surface like their surfaces; and so on." For if the bulk were like that of a water-melon, or if the shape were cubical, or if the colour were inky black, or if the surface were covered with thorns, the object would not be perceived to be an apple. The act of perception, therefore, consists in the recognition of sundry attributes as like sundry attributes previously known, and as having relations to one another like the relations between the before-known attributes. This will appear still more clearly, when we recollect what takes place in visual perception. It is well known that the eye, unassisted by the muscular and tactual senses, can take no cognizance of distance, shape, or solidity —the only impressions which the retina receives are impressions of colour, and indirectly of superficial extension. It is because of this that infants reach out for the moon, and that blind men, on first receiving sight, are unable to distinguish between a round orange and a cubical block, without feeling the surfaces of the two. Only after repeated and careful comparison of visual impressions with muscular and tactual impressions is the patient enabled to discover, by the eye alone, that all the objects in the

room or in the landscape are not in contact with his body; and it is only after a similar elaborate comparison that the young child achieves the feat of looking at an object in a given direction, or of recognizing by vision its father or mother. Accordingly, when looking about the room, all that you really *see* is a congeries of coloured spots. Your knowledge of the presence of divers objects—chairs, windows, mirror, mantel-piece—is not given in the act of vision, but is the result of an exceedingly complex, though apparently instantaneous, process of reasoning. Your seemingly immediate knowledge that a certain group of coloured spots means a chair is due to the fact, that from early infancy this group of coloured spots, or some other like group, has been associated with sundry impressions of touch and resistance, and with sensations yielded by the little muscles which turn the eye hither and thither. The frequency with which the association has been repeated has rendered the process of inference automatic, just as, to a less-marked extent, the process of reading, at first accompanied by a conscious classification of every letter, has become automatic, so that we are not aware of cognizing the letters at all. Nevertheless, although too rapid to rise into consciousness, the process is still one of inference, implying, like any other process of inference, the grouping of certain relations as like or unlike certain other relations. Certain correlated groups of colours are automatically classified with other correlated groups of colours previously received upon the retina, and also with certain correlated groups of muscular and tactual impressions, previously received simultaneously with the groups of colours in question. Thus our visual perception of objects consists of a group of sensations *plus* a complicated series of inferences which does not differ fundamentally from a course of scientific demonstration. And the same truth may be, with equal justice, though less vividly, illustrated in the case of any other sense than sight. A much simpler case than that of visual perception is that of a spoon,

containing some unknown liquid, thrust into the mouth by another person in the dark. Here the only clue to the character of the liquid is its taste; and when, by its peculiar mild pungency, the liquid is recognized as bromide of potassium, the psychical process consists of a gustatory sensation *plus* an act of classification by which the sensation is grouped with other like sensations previously received. The example is a good one, as showing us also the obverse case. If bromide of potassium has not been previously tasted, the result is simply gustatory sensation unattended by perception; or rather, it is gustatory sensation generically classified as mildly pungent, but not specifically referred to any known liquid, and therefore only partially interpreted. There is perception, but it is incomplete.

It is not pretended that these psychological truths are established by the crude and fragmentary exposition here given. The numerous observations and experiments upon which they are based would be very interesting to recount; but our space does not admit of detailed proof, nor is it needed; since these truths are the common property of psychologists, and will be questioned by no competent student of the phenomena of mind. Referring, for minute and elaborate proof, to Mr. Spencer's "Principles of Psychology," let us be content with setting down the implication which is common to all these conclusions; namely, that between the various psychical processes thus far contemplated, which include alike the measurement of celestial distances by the astronomer, and the direct perception of objects by the unlearned child, or indeed by the ape or dog, there is generic identity. The fundamental characteristic which is common to them all is the reception of certain groups of sensations, accompanied by the classification of these groups of sensations, and of the relations between them, according to their various likenesses and unlikenesses. The difference between the highest and the lowest of the processes thus brought

together consists solely in the heterogeneity and definiteness of the groups which are classified, and in the extent to which the classifications are compounded.

To such a statement, however, there is one essential qualification to be added. It is not strictly correct to say that the classification involved alike in the most complex act of reasoning and in the simplest act of perception is a classification of groups of *sensations* and of the relations between them. For, when an object is perceived, along with the sensations actually present, there are remembered or internally-revived sensations which enter into the classification, and these internally-revived sensations are what we call ideas or images. For example, "when passing the finger over a rough surface, the perception contains very much more than the coordinated sensations immediately experienced. Along with these there go the remembered visual impressions produced by such a surface, which cannot be kept out of the mind, and in the suggestion of which the perception largely consists; and there are automatic inferences respecting the texture and density of the substance." So when we see an orange lying on the table, the only sensation actually present and entering into the case is the sensation of a patch of reddish-yellow colour surrounded by other unlike patches of colour. The other elements in the classification of which the perception consists are ideas or internally-revived sensations of position, shape, bulk, texture, juiciness, and so on. And now we discover another point of difference in degree between perception and reasoning. While in perception some of the elements classified must be sensations actually present, in reasoning *all* the elements classified may be ideas or internally-revived sensations. The sides and angles of the isosceles triangles which the astronomer compares in estimating the moon's distance are ideal sides and angles; and the naturalist, in writing about the classification of ruminants, deals solely with internally-revived impressions of horns, hoofs, and multiple

stomachs, which were previously present to sense. Thus the classification involved in reasoning differs from that involved in perception, not only in heterogeneity and definiteness, but also in *indirectness*. Nevertheless the difference is not fundamental, but is only a difference in degree; as is proved by the fact that alike in reasoning and in perception there is implied the previous reception of the actually present sensations of which the ideas or revived sensations are the copies. Our statement, therefore, will become strictly correct if we say that the fundamental characteristic common to the most refined reasoning, and the crudest perception, is the presence of certain *states of consciousness*, accompanied by the classification of these states and of the relations between them according to their various likenesses and unlikenesses; the differences between the processes being differences in heterogeneity, definiteness, indirectness, and extent of integration or compounding.

Let us next observe that, as between the highest and lowest kinds of reasoning there is a great difference in the extent to which the comparison of relations is carried, so between the highest and lowest kinds of perception there is a similar difference.

There is a striking contrast in degree of directness " between the perception that some surface touched by the finger is hard, and the perception that a building at which we are looking is a cathedral. The one piece of knowledge is almost immediate. The other is mediate in a double, a triple, a quadruple, and even in a still higher degree. It is mediate inasmuch as the solidity of that which causes the visual impression is inferential; mediate inasmuch as its position, its size, its shape, are inferential; mediate inasmuch as its material, its hollowness, are inferential; mediate inasmuch as its ecclesiastical purpose is an inference from these inferences; and mediate inasmuch as the identification of it as a particular cathedral is a still more remote inference resulting

from the union of these inferences with those many others through which the locality is recognized."[1] From this example it appears that while, at the highest extreme, perception emerges into reasoning, on the other hand at its lowest extreme, as where a body is perceived to be rough or hard, it borders very closely upon simple sensation. Proceeding, then, a step farther in our descending analysis, we have to examine the character of the difference between perception and sensation.

Sensation, no less than perception, has a variety of grades. At the one extreme it rises to a point where it is barely distinguishable from perception; at the other extreme it lapses into an unconscious or sub-conscious psychical state. While writing these lines the sum-total of my consciousness may contain elements contributed by dull sounds of persons walking overhead, by the rumbling of wagons in the street, by faint odours wafted from the kitchen, by soothing pulses of sensation from the pipe held in my mouth, and by the occasional striking of the cuckoo-clock, as well as by the pressure exerted by the chair in which I am sitting, and the table upon which my arm is resting, and the pen which is grasped in my fingers. But, while I am absorbed in thought, none of these elements rise into the foreground of consciousness: though they are present as psychical states, as is shown by the fact that the going out of the pipe or the failure of the clock to strike is noticed, yet I become *conscious* of them, in the ordinary sense of the word, "only when they pass a certain degree of intensity," as when a child overhead falls on the floor, or when the shriek and rumble of a passing railway-train are added to the confused mass of out-door noises; "and only then can I be said to experience" these feelings "as sensations." But when a psychical state rises into the foreground of consciousness and becomes known as a sensation, as when my finger happens to touch the heated pipe-

[1] Spencer, *Principles of Psychology*, vol. ii. p. 245.

bowl, then "I not only contemplate the affection as an affection of myself—as a state through which my consciousness is passing or has passed—but I also contemplate it as existing in a certain part of my body—as standing in certain relations of position. I perceive *where* it is." The close relationship between sensation and perception is illustrated by this example: nevertheless psychology here distinguishes between two portions of the mental act. Though in the practical experience there is no separation between the two, yet analysis enables us to distinguish between the consciousness of the painful feeling and the consciousness of the presence of the heated object which causes the feeling; and the former of these we call sensation, while the latter we call perception.

We shall now be greatly assisted by observing a psychological fact of which Sir William Hamilton caught a glimpse, though, as usual, his analysis was not sufficiently thorough, and his statement of the case was inaccurate. We need not pause to criticize the theorem that while "perception proper and sensation proper exist only as they coexist, in the degree or intensity of their existence they are always found in an inverse ratio to each other;" for its inaccuracy has been fully demonstrated by Mr. Mill and also by Mr. Spencer, who shows the true statement to be, "not that sensation and perception vary inversely, but that they exclude each other with degrees of stringency which vary inversely." To illustrate this, we will suppose that you are getting water from a hot-water faucet, and that, as the water begins by running cold, you clasp your hand about the faucet so as to turn it off when the water has become sufficiently warm. While the water is cool or tepid, sensation is at the minimum, and not only is there no exclusion of perception, but consciousness is occupied with the outer phenomena, the faucet and the running water, more than with the inner phenomenon, the feeling of temperature. The pointed end of the upright

part of the faucet, and the protuberance where the horizontal piece is fitted upon it, awaken tactual sensations which coexist with the sensation of temperature, and the automatic comparison of these sensations which constitutes the perception of the faucet goes on unhindered. To concentrate consciousness upon the feeling of temperature requires a voluntary act of attention, induced by the desire to know how warm the water is getting. As the water becomes very much warmer, so as to be slightly uncomfortable, the perception of the faucet does not become gradually less vivid, but it tends to disappear entirely, and consciousness tends to occupy itself exclusively with the feeling of temperature. Only through a distinct voluntary effort can the perception be made to come into the foreground of consciousness. If, now, there comes a sudden spurt of very hot water, the tactual perception of the faucet is for the moment entirely excluded, and the perceptive act implied in the estimation of the degree of temperature is also expelled from consciousness, which is occupied entirely with the sensation of pain, inducing a violent withdrawal of the hand. Here sensation, reaching a maximum, has quite driven out the group of tactual perceptions, and even visual perceptions are to that extent held in abeyance, that for the moment they cease to occupy the attention. If, now, a piece of soap is taken from its dish, the newly-aroused group of sensations—of weight, hardness, smoothness, and the rest—exist in minimum intensity, and consciousness is occupied, not with them, but with the presence of the piece of soap: perception tends to exclude sensation.

"What, now," inquires Mr. Spencer, "is the real nature of this mutual exclusion? Is it not an instance of the general fact that consciousness cannot be in two equally distinct states at the same time; and that in proportion as the predominance of one state becomes more marked, the suppression of other states becomes more decided? I cannot know

that I have a sensation without, for the moment, having my attention specially occupied with that sensation. I cannot know the external thing causing it, without, for the moment, having my attention specially occupied with that external thing. As either cognition rises, the other ceases." By the "external thing," Mr. Spencer does not here mean the *Ding an sich*, but the group of phenomena which are referred to an existence outside of the organism. But we have already seen that, when consciousness is so occupied with such a group of phenomena that the result is the perception of an object, the psychical act involved is an automatic classification of sundry states of consciousness and of the relations between them, according to their various likenesses and unlikenesses. Thus we arrive at the distinction between sensation and perception. Impossible as it is to disentangle the two in practical experience, analysis yet distinguishes the former as an apparently elementary state of consciousness, while the latter is "a discerning of the relations between states of consciousness." According, therefore, as attention is directed chiefly to a conscious feeling or to the relations between a number of feelings, is now sensation and then perception predominant.

It remains to be observed that sensations, or—as we may otherwise call them—feelings, are either peripherally or centrally initiated. In other words, a feeling may either originate at the surface of the organism—as is the case with sensations of sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch, and in the main with muscular and thermal sensations; or it may originate in the interior of the organism—as is the case with the sensations of hunger and repletion, and with certain muscular sensations, such as cramp; or, again, it may start from some group of nerve-centres, as is the case with those vague feelings which accompany more or less complex acts of perception and reasoning, and which, when they acquire a certain degree of prominence, we call emotions. By the inclusion of these states of consciousness, the term "feeling" covers a

somewhat wider range of meaning than the term "sensation." Nevertheless the current use of the word "feeling" to designate indifferently a sensation or an emotion bears unconscious witness to the fact that the two kinds of psychical state differ only in their modes of genesis and of composition. The contrast between a peripheral sensation, as of colour or touch, and an emotion, is chiefly a contrast in degree of definiteness and of localization. But this contrast holds also between peripheral sensations and such vague internal sensations as hunger, which, being known as cravings, are assimilated to the lowest orders of emotion. From this difference in definiteness arises the fact that the peripheral sensations admit of being definitely grouped according to their relations of likeness and unlikeness, and thus afford the material for perception and reasoning, while emotional states admit no such definite grouping, but arrange themselves variously in clusters, the particular character of the cluster being determined by certain contemporaneous perceptions or ideal reproductions of past perceptions. For these reasons the ultimate psychological nature of emotion can be reached only through a synthetical interpretation which starts by recognizing the fact that, along with that classifying of conscious states which occurs in perception and reasoning, there goes on a recognition of certain states as pleasurable or desirable to retain in consciousness, and a recognition of certain other states as painful or desirable to expel from consciousness. Thus in practical experience emotions are, in however slight a degree, inseparably associated with perceptions and inferences, as the vague, internally-initiated feelings accompanying the definite peripheral feelings in the classifying of which the perceptions and inferences consist.

Looking back, now, over the region already traversed, we find that we have passed in review a large number of mental operations which differ immensely in complexity, some of them being performed only by the most highly-educated adult

civilized men, while others are performed habitually by children, barbarians, and numerous animals inferior to man. Yet, amid all this diversity, our analysis has detected a fundamental unity. In spite of their vast differences in complexity, we have seen that all these mental operations are ultimately made up of the same psychical process. The grouping of the relations among feelings is the elementary act which is repeated alike in each simple and direct act of perception, and in each complicated and indirect act of ratiocination. At the present stage of our analysis, therefore, the ultimate elements of mind would seem to be *feelings* and the *relations between feelings*. It remains to add that relations themselves must be secondary feelings due to the bringing together of primary feelings. We can know a relation only as some modification of consciousness resulting from some combination of the feelings directly aroused in us by inner or outer agencies; and such modification of consciousness must be itself a kind of feeling. For further illustration let us briefly mention the different relations in the order of their decreasing complexity, that we may note the fundamental relation involved in them all. The most complex relations are those of *similarity* and *dissimilarity*, as exemplified when we recognize the kinship between a thorough-bred race-horse and a Shetland pony, or the complicated divergences between a city and a village. Simpler relations are those of *cointension* and *non-cointension*, as when we perceive that two sounds are equal in degree of loudness, or that in grasping wood and in grasping marble the feelings of temperature are different in degree; of *coextension* and *non-coextension*, as when two lines or two areas are seen to be equal or unequal; of *coexistence* and *non-coexistence*, as when the yellow-reddish light reflected by an orange is regarded as accompanied by sweetness and juiciness, but not by viscidity; of *connature* and *non-connature*, as when greater warmth is mentally assimilated to less warmth, but distinguished from blueness or roughness. Now, underlying all

these relations, and all mental processes whatever, is the relation of *likeness* and *unlikeness* between primary states of consciousness. Given the power of recognizing two feelings or conscious states as like each other, and two other feelings or conscious states as unlike each other, and we have the primordial process in the manifold compounding of which all operations of intelligence consist. Let us now take into the account the universally-admitted fact that consciousness is rendered possible only by ceaseless change of state—that a uniform state of consciousness is in no respect different from complete unconsciousness. If our minds were to become spellbound, like the palace of the Sleeping Beauty, all our thoughts and feelings remaining fixed *in statu quo*, our conscious existence would be practically at an end. For consciousness to exist at all, it is necessary that a given state should be followed by a different state. But this is not all that is required. A succession of feelings, of which no two were alike, would not give rise to consciousness, since the recognition of any feeling implies its classification with some antecedent like feeling. Consciousness, therefore, "is not simply a succession of changes, but an *orderly* succession of changes—a succession of changes *combined and arranged* in special ways." Thus we reach the law of the Composition of Mind. Since intelligence cannot arise or continue unless consciousness is continually passing from one state into a different state, it follows that there must be a continuous *differentiation* of states; and again, since intelligence cannot arise or continue unless particular states of consciousness are continually known as like certain previous states, it follows that there must be a continuous *integration* of states. Alike in the most rudimentary perception and in the most developed reasoning, the essential process is the separation of the unlike and the bringing together of the like. So that, "under its most general aspect, all mental action whatever is definable as *the continuous differentiation and integration of*

states of consciousness," and the kind of mental action is regarded as high or low, according to the greater or less extent to which the differentiation and integration are carried. The phenomena of conscious intelligence are thus seen to conform to the universal law of evolution; and we may further note that this conclusion is entirely in harmony with the definition of psychical life as the continuous adjustment of inner to outer relations. For clearly, when an intelligence is developing in the midst of a complex environment, the greater the number of subjective relations which are adjusted to objective relations, the greater will be the extent to which the differentiation and integration of conscious states will be carried.

Here we may seem to have arrived at a satisfactory conclusion of our analysis. But the lowest depths of the problem yet remain to be sounded, as will be seen when we consider a superficial objection not unfrequently urged against the foregoing views. Alike in all the mental operations which have formed the subject-matter of our analysis, we have seen that the relations of likeness and unlikeness entering into the case are classified with certain other relations of likeness and unlikeness previously cognized. The thought which determines the astronomer in calculating the moon's distance, implies previous experience of triangles and of numerical relations. In the classification of a giraffe there is implied previous acquaintance with the complex relations of structure and function connoted by the terms *ruminant*, *ungulate*, *monodelphian*, *mammal*, *vertebrate*, and *animal*. The perception of an apple implies numerous antecedent experiences of colour, size, configuration, smoothness, odour, and taste. And in like manner, though we have provisionally defined a sensation as an "elementary state of consciousness," yet we have also seen that, in order to become truly conscious of a sensation, we must know it, or, in other words, must classify it with some like sensation previously felt.

In short, we have seen that there can be no *cognition*, of whatever order, which is not a *recognition*, necessarily implying some previous combination of psychical states. How, then, it is asked, can there be any first cognition? How can intelligence ever begin at all, if the first and simplest intelligent act implies a reference to experiences which, in accordance with the theory, must have preceded any intelligent act?

Formidable as this objection may seem, and unanswerable as it would have been, if urged half a century ago, it has to-day no force whatever; and those who now deliberately urge it succeed only in betraying their entire lack of acquaintance with the progress which psychology has made since the times of Reid and Stewart. As long as psychological questions were settled simply by introspection—by observing what goes on in the consciousness of adult civilized man—the objection here cited must have seemed conclusive. But familiarity with the conception of evolution has now led us to regard things in general, not as coming at once into fulness of being, but as gradually beginning to be; and in the case of the phenomena of intelligence, this view of the question is amply justified by experiments in objective psychology presently to be mentioned. The conception of an absolutely first cognition, not determined by previous psychical states, rests upon a fallacy similar to that upon which rested the preformation theory in biology. Just as it was formerly held that the embryo started as a fully-developed organism, differing from an adult organism only in size, so the objection which we are now considering involves the hypothesis that the earliest cognitions of an infant are like those of an adult in point of definiteness, the only difference being in the quantity of them. The latter hypothesis is as contrary as the former to the Doctrine of Evolution, and it is quite as decidedly negatived by the observation of facts. For, let us observe what is implied by the acquiring of a

definite cognition by an infant. If the foregoing analysis be taken as correct, it is obvious that when any object, as an orange, is first presented to the mind of an infant, it cannot be perceived or identified as an orange. Before this intellectual feat can be achieved, there must go on for some time that complicated grouping of visual, tactual, and gustatory sensations above described. In accordance with the established theory of vision, we must admit that, when the orange is held before the child's eye, the only sensation aroused is that of a reddish-yellow colour, which cannot even be perceived to be round until after it has been associated with sundry tactual sensations. But this is not all. Not even the sensation of a reddish-yellow colour can acquire definite shape in consciousness, until sensations of blue, or red, or green, or white colour, have been aroused, with which it can be contrasted, and until a subsequent like sensation of reddish-yellow colour has been aroused to which it can be assimilated. Observe, now, the position into which we are brought. We are obliged to hold that the first sensation of orange-colour cannot, strictly speaking, exist as a sensation at all; while, nevertheless, a subsequent sensation of orange-colour (not, in any actual case, the second, but the twentieth or hundredth) occurring after intervening sensations of blue or green, can acquire definite shape as a sensation by being compared with this first sensation which is not strictly a sensation. Obviously, then, though the first presentation of orange-colour cannot awaken a visual sensation which can be known as such, it must produce some psychical state which is real, though not known. For if no psychical state were produced by the first presentation, then the second, or twentieth, or hundredth presentation could no more awaken a definite state of consciousness than the first. We are thus led to the assertion that states of consciousness may be produced by the differential grouping or compounding of psychical states which are beneath consciousness.

Now, this conclusion, which admirably explains the beginnings of conscious intelligence in the young child, is completely confirmed by experiments lately made with reference to the continuous genesis of sensations in the adult. Not only does the infant frame its earliest conscious sensations by the compounding of unconscious or sub-conscious psychical changes, but in every sensation of sound, colour, odour, taste, or touch, which the adult receives, there is a precisely similar formation of a conscious state by the compounding of unconscious or sub-conscious psychical states. In the case of sound, the evidence for this statement amounts to complete demonstration; the evidence is hardly less strong in the case of sight; and, in the case of the other senses, all the evidence thus far obtained points toward the same conclusion. Let us first examine the composition of a sensation of sound, as admirably elucidated by M. Taine in his recent treatise on "Intelligence."

In musical sounds three characteristics are to be distinguished—loudness, pitch, and quality or *timbre*. The first of these, the loudness, depends upon the amplitude of the atmospheric waves by which the sensation of sound is caused. A series of sound-producing waves, like any other series of waves, has its elevations and depressions, and the height of the elevation above the depression is called the *amplitude* of the wave. The loudness of the sound varies as the square of the wave's amplitude. From this it follows that every elementary sound has a period of minimum intensity, answering to the wave's minimum amplitude when it is just beginning to rise; secondly, a period of maximum intensity anwering to the wave's maximum amplitude when it has risen to its greatest height; and, thirdly, a period of minimum intensity, answering to the wave's minimum amplitude when it has sunk nearly to the level again; while between these minima and the maximum there are many varying degrees of loudness. In other words, every elementary

sound is at first faint, then gradually becomes loud, then grows fainter, till it disappears. Now, note what happens when elementary sounds are made to succeed each other. If the succession be irregular, there is a mere chaos of noises—a case with which we need not here deal. But if the succession be regular, and steadily increase in rapidity, there follows a remarkable series of results. As long as the waves or pulses answering to the elementary sounds succeed each other slowly, the sounds are distinguishable from each other as raps or puffs, according to the instrument employed, and each has its maximum and its two minima of intensity. But, when the waves begin to strike the ear at the rate of about sixteen in a second, the consciousness of separate raps or puffs becomes evanescent, and there arises the consciousness of a continuous tone of very low pitch. That the consciousness of the separate sounds has not quite ceased, and that the continuousness of the tone which they compose is not complete, are shown by the fact that the maxima and minima are still perceived. In the deepest bass-notes of an organ, for example, the pulsations are clearly distinguishable —a fact which proves that we are conscious of the effects answering respectively to the protuberances and to the hollows of the waves. Now, the pitch of a tone depends upon the rapidity with which the waves succeed each other, and, therefore, upon their length, or the distance between two successive hollows, because as the waves come faster they grow shorter. The shorter the waves, the higher the pitch. Hence, as the pitch rises, the protuberance of any wave approaches nearer and nearer to the protuberances of the waves immediately behind it and in front of it, and the maximum intensities of sound which answer to the protuberances become crowded together in consciousness. The result is that, after a while, the maxima and minima are no longer distinguishable by the ear, so that by no effort of attention can we discern the elementary pulses of which the tone is

composed. The tone asserts itself to be completely homogeneous. All that mere introspection could discover in consciousness would be an apparently simple sensation of musical tone. Yet into the composition of this sensation there enter a thousand or several thousand psychical states answering to the presence of as many elementary sounds with their maxima and minima of intensity. And if any one of these elementary sub-conscious psychical states were absent, the character of the conscious sensation would be different from what it is.

But this is not all. Every musical tone has a *timbre* or quality of its own, according as it proceeds from a piano, a violin, a flute, or any other instrument. Now, Helmholtz has proved that the quality of any tone is due solely to the number and combinations of certain higher and fainter tones which accompany it. Along with the fundamental note there are heard sundry harmonic notes, due to vibrations from two to ten times more rapid than those which constitute the fundamental note. When any note is sounded on the piano, the first six harmonics are sounded with it; when the same note is sounded on the violin, by means of the bow, the first six harmonics are sounded so feebly as to be overpowered by the seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth; and this is the only cause of the difference in quality of tone between the piano and the violin. Now, by an effort of attention these harmonic over-tones may be recognized as distinct sensations when two or three notes are slowly struck. But in ordinarily rapid playing they are not distinctly recognized. Their only effect is to impart to the tones that peculiar quality which enables the ear to recognize the instrument from which they emanate. Thus our apparently simple sensations of musical sound are enormously complex. When F-*in-alt* is sounded on the violin, there are produced, in the course of a single second, several thousand psychical states which together make up the sen-

sation of pitch, fifty-five times as many psychical states which together make up the sensation of quality, and an immense number of other psychical states which together make up the sensation of intensity. These psychical states are not, in any strict sense of the term, states of consciousness; for, if they were to rise individually into consciousness, the result would be an immense multitude of sensations, and not a single homogeneous sensation. There is no alternative, therefore, but to conclude that in this case a seemingly simple state of consciousness is in reality compounded of an immense multitude of sub-conscious psychical changes.

Returning, now, to what we have called the elementary sound, by the manifold compounding of which all cognizable tones, qualities, and intensities are built up, we shall the more readily yield to the evidence which shows that even this primitive unit of sound is not elementary. For, as M. Taine observes, each so-called elementary sound, in passing from its minimum to its maximum, passes through an infinite series of degrees of intensity, and, unless there were some psychical modification corresponding to each increment of intensity, there would be no state of consciousness answering to the total rise from the minimum to the maximum. Again, while, for simplicity's sake, we have assumed that each of the raps or puffs which occur too slowly to be heard as a single tone of lowest pitch is heard by itself as an elementary sensation, this is not strictly true. For the so-called simple sensation must be either a sensation of musical tone or a sensation of noise. In the former case its composite character has been already shown. In the latter case, in the sensation of noise, rap, or puff, the truly primitive elements are sub-conscious psychical states answering to successive waves of unequal lengths. Any one of these waves by itself will not produce a genuine state of consciousness; it is only by compounding the sub-conscious psychical affections which

they severally produce, that we obtain the co-called elementary sensation of noise or rap.

In every way, therefore, the conclusion is forced upon us that every one of our apparently simple auditory sensations is made up of a vast multitude of psychical affections, of which the really simple ones would never rise into consciousness save by being joined with others. Our simplest cognizable sensation of sound is in reality a compound of the fourth or fifth, or even of some higher, order.

In the case of visual sensations, the same conclusion is reached by a precisely similar argument, sensations of colour differing from those of sound only as answering to wavelengths immeasurably shorter and more rapid in succession. It is unnecessary to insist upon the manifold analogies between sound and light, which are each day brought more vividly before the attention of the physical inquirer, as, for example, in the wonderful but plausible hypothesis lately propounded, that all the lines in the spectrum are simply the harmonic overtones of a fundamental colour, which, being a couple of octaves below red, is itself invisible. Restricting our statement to ascertained points of resemblance, it may be said that the argument from the phenomena of musical pitch applies step by step to the phenomena of colour as we rise in the scale from red to violet; the only difference being that, as the slowest vibrations which the eye receives occur at the rate of about 458,000,000,000,000 in a second, we cannot experimentally distinguish, as in the case of the lowest sounds, the seemingly elementary sensation which answers to each couple of vibrations, Nevertheless, from experiments with the electric spark it has been shown that a sensation of light which endures for one second is composed of at least a million successive sensations, each one of which, if separately excited, would rise into consciousness and be recognized as a flash of light. Now, as this flash of electric light is cognized as white, it follows that the cognizable sensation

which lasts for one-millionth of a second is really made up of at least three sub-conscious psychical states, which, if they were severally to rise into consciousness, would be severally cognized as red, green, and violet flashes—these being the primitive elements of which the consciousness of white light is composed. This fact alone shows that the method by which a sensation is formed out of sub-conscious psychical changes is essentially the same in the eye and in the ear.

No such elaborate investigations have been made with reference to the other peripheral sensations. Yet, in the cases of smell and taste, the argument is not essentially different from what it is in the cases of hearing and vision. The physical antecedent, either of smell or taste, is a chemical reaction between particles of the odorous or sapid substance, and the ends of the olfactory or gustatory nerve-fibrils. Now, a chemical reaction implies an enormous number of undulatory movements by which myriads of molecules are seeking to reach a position of equilibrium. Accordingly, the end of the nerve-fibrils in the olfactory chamber or in the tongue must be rapidly smitten by little molecular waves, just as the auditory filaments are smitten by atmospheric waves; and thus there is indicated a course of argument similar to that employed in the case of sound. It may be fairly argued that if each wave does not produce some sub-conscious psychical effect, the sum of the waves will not produce a state of consciousness known as smell or taste; so that here too the seemingly primitive sensation is really derivative and compound.

M. Taine's argument with reference to the tactile sensations is singularly beautiful, but no room is left for more than the briefest allusion to a few of its salient points. All tactile sensations are either dermal or muscular; that is, they are due, either to disturbances of nerve-fibrils embedded in the skin, or to disturbances of nerve-fibrils embedded in the extremities of the muscles lying under the skin. In the first case, the sensa-

tion is either of contact or of temperature; in the second case, there is a sensation of resistance or pressure; and in both cases, when the sensation proper to the nerve is prolonged or intensified beyond a certain degree, it is at first accompanied and finally supplanted by a sensation of pain. Now, Weber's experiments have shown that these differences in sensation are not due to the excitation of distinct nerves, but to the differently-combined excitation of the filaments of the same nerves. The difference between the sensation of contact and the sensation of temperature depends upon the order in which the filaments of a particular nerve are set in vibration. And thus, as Fick observes, we may understand why it is difficult to distinguish between a prick from a needle and a minute burn from a spark of fire; for the nearer we approach to a truly elementary sensation, the more evanescent becomes the distinction between the compound sensation of temperature and that of mechanical contact. On the contrary, when a larger area of skin is suddenly rubbed or burnt, so that enough nerves are brought into play to compound the elements of the sensations, then there is no difficulty in distinguishing the feeling of temperature from that of mechanical contact. From these and many other kindred facts, to which scanty justice is done by this cursory allusion, M. Taine very plausibly concludes that our ordinary tactile sensations are made up of little component psychical affections differing only in number, order, and duration; while, according as these elementary psychical states are differently compounded, they form conscious sensations which, as presented to consciousness, seem to be severally simple and distinct in kind.

Throughout this remarkable analysis questions are suggested which can be completely answered only when physics and chemistry, as well as physiology and psychology, are much more advanced than at present. Yet there are three important principles which we may regard as established in the case of sound, and as clearly indicated in the case of the

other sensations. The *first* is, that sensations which are apparently simple and elementary, and which cannot be analyzed by mere observation of consciousness, are nevertheless compounded of many successive and simultaneous sensations, which are themselves compounded of still lower psychical affections. The *second* is, that two sensations, which differ only in the mode in which their elements are compounded, may appear in consciousness as generically different and irreducible to each other. The *third* is, that two or more psychical affections which, taken separately, are as non-existent to consciousness, may, nevertheless, when taken together, coalesce into a sensation which is present to consciousness. And when these three conclusions are presented in a single statement, they become equivalent to the conclusion above obtained from examining the beginnings of conscious intelligence in an infant; namely, that states of consciousness may be produced by the differential grouping or compounding of psychical states which are beneath consciousness.

This result is in entire harmony with what might be inferred *à priori* from the known characteristics of nerve-action. Whether in the grey substance of ganglia, or in the white substance of nerve-fibres, the physical action which accompanies psychical changes is an undulatory displacement of molecules resulting in myriads of little waves or pulses of movement. From this fact we might have suspected that, as a cognizable state of consciousness is attended by the transmission of a number of little waves from one nerve-cell to another, so the ultimate psychical elements of each conscious state must correspond to the passage of these little waves taken one by one. And this inference, which by itself would be only a plausible guess, is raised to the rank of a scientific hypothesis by its harmony with the results of the analysis above sketched.

Thus we are led to infer, as the ultimate unit of which

Mind is composed, a simple *psychical shock*, answering to that simple *physical pulsation* which is the ultimate unit of nervous action. By the manifold and diverse compounding of myriads of such primitive psychical shocks, according to the slight structural differences of different nerves, are formed innumerable elementary sensations, which appear to be generally different; just as aquafortis and laughing-gas, which seem generically different, yet differ really only in the proportions of nitrogen and oxygen which compose them. By a similar differential compounding of these elementary sensations, we get complex sensations of blueness and redness, warmth, pressure, sweetness, roughness, and of various kinds of *timbre* and degrees of pitch. Carrying still farther the same process of differentiation and integration, we rise step by step to perceptions of greater and greater complexity, to conscious classifications, and to reasoning in its various forms, from the crude inferences of the child, barbarian, or boor, to the subtle and indirect combinations of the artist and the scientific discoverer. Thus, amid all their endless diversities, we discern, though dimly, a fundamental *unity of composition* throughout all orders of psychical activity, from the highest to the lowest.

Near the close of his first edition of the "Origin of Species," Mr. Darwin predicted that the establishment of his theory would eventually place the science of psychology upon a new basis—that of the acquirement of each mental faculty by slow gradations.[1] We seem now to have fairly started upon the path which leads to this desired goal. For, while, among the mental operations above analyzed, some are peculiar to the highest human intelligence, there are others which are shared by the highest and the lowest human

[1] Mr. Darwin has since recognized that this new basis is already well laid by Mr. Spencer. See *Origin of Species*, 6th edit., p. 428. Indeed the "Principles of Psychology," upon which the present chapter is almost entirely founded, was first published in 1855, four years before the "Origin of Species."

intelligence. Others—as the simplest inferences, several complex perceptions, and all the most simple ones—are shared by all human intelligence with the intelligence of apes, dogs, horses, and indeed of the majority of mammals, many birds, and possibly some lower animals. Others, again—as the simplest perceptive acts implied in recognizing a sensation—must be shared with all those animals whose nervous system is sufficiently complex to allow of their having any consciousness whatever. While others, finally—as the simplest sub-conscious groupings of primitive psychical shocks—must be shared by humanity with all those forms of animal existence which possess any nervous structure whatever. For instance, that reflex action which occurs when the foot of a sleeping person, casually moved into a cold part of the bed, is quickly withdrawn without arousing any state of consciousness, involves the activity of a fragment of the human nervous system which corresponds in general structure to the entire nervous system of a medusa or jelly-fish. In such lowly creatures, then, we must suppose that the psychical actions which go on are similar to our own sub-conscious psychical actions. And, clearly, if we could trace the slow increments by which the nervous system has grown in heterogeneity, definiteness, and coherence, during the countless ages which have witnessed the progress from the primeval marine vertebrate to the civilized modern man, we should also be able to trace the myriad stages of the composition of mind, from the reflex contractions of a rudimentary fin, up to the generalizations of an Aristotle or a Newton.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE EVOLUTION OF MIND.

THAT the amount of intelligence manifested by any vertebrate animal depends to a certain extent upon the amount of nerve-tissue integrated in its cephalic ganglia, and especially in the cerebrum, is a truth familiar to everyone, though often crudely stated and incorrectly interpreted. In the lowest vertebrate, the amphioxus, there is no brain at all. In fishes, the cerebrum and cerebellum are much smaller than the optic lobes; the cerebrum being in many large fishes about the size of a pea, though in the shark it reaches the size of a plum. Continuing to grow by the addition of concentric layers at the surface, the cerebrum becomes somewhat larger in birds and in the lower mammals. It gradually covers up the optic lobes, and extends backwards as we pass to higher mammalian forms, until in the anthropoid apes and in man it covers the whole upper surface of the cerebellum. In these highest animals it begins also to extend forwards. In the chimpanzee and gorilla the anterior portion of the cerebrum is larger than in inferior mammals; but in these animals, as in the lowest races of men, the frontal extension is but slight, and the forehead is both low and narrow. In civilized man, the anterior portion of the cerebrum is greatly extended both vertically and laterally. As already observed, the most prominent physiological feature of human progress has been the growth of the cerebrum. The cranial capacity of an averag Euro-

pean exceeds that of the Australians and Bushmen by nearly forty cubic inches; and the expansion is chiefly in the upper and anterior portions.

But this parallelism between increased intelligence and increased size of the cerebrum is complicated by a further parallelism between the amount of intelligence and the irregular creasing and furrowing of the cerebral surface. In the higher mammals both the cerebrum and the cerebellum are convoluted. But the convolutions do not correspond with any "bumps," real or imaginary, on the external surface of the skull; they are not symmetrical on opposite sides, like the fancied "organs" of the phrenologists; nor indeed, so far as the general brain-surface is concerned, do they constitute elevations and depressions at all. The surface of the brain does not resemble a group of hills and valleys, but rather a perfectly smooth table-land cut here and there by very steep and narrow chasms. A perfectly smooth lump of butter, irregularly furrowed by a sharp knife held perpendicularly, would present a surface like that of the human brain. Now the amount of intelligence depends in some way on the number and irregularity of these furrows. In the lowest monadelphian mammals, as the rodents and the lowest monkeys, there are no furrows, or only a few very shallow ones. In the carnivora and ungulata, there are numerous furrows, some of them tolerably deep, but all of them symmetrically arranged. As we proceed to the higher apes, we find the furrows increasing in number and depth, though not yet losing their symmetry of arrangement. Idiots, young children, and adult savages have these creases few and regular; and in the lower races their arrangement is similar in different individuals. But in civilized man the creases are very numerous, deep and irregular; and they are not alike in any two individuals.[1]

[1] Phrenologists have done good service by familiarizing the unlearned public with the fact that the quantity of mental capacity is related to the

The convolutions into which the human brain is divided by these furrows, consist for the most part of "eight distinct and concentric layers, formed chiefly of closely-packed fibres, and of crowds of cells of very different shapes, the layers differing in the relative proportion of cells and fibres, and in the manner of their arrangement."[1] Each cell sends forth processes with which the tissue of certain fibres becomes continuous. The office of the fibres is to establish communication between the cells. Between millions of these cells there run millions of fibres, establishing communications in all directions. And the elaborate researches of Schroeder van der Kolk have gone far to prove that the shapes of the cells and the intricacy of their communications vary with the amount of intelligence. In various forms of mental disease, both cells and fibres undergo pathological changes, such as atrophy, hardening, softening, or some other form of degeneration. That is to say, not only are the activities of the cells impeded, but the channels of communication are variously obliterated or blocked up.

quantity of brain. But the character of this relationship is seriously misinterpreted both by phrenologists and by the rest of the unlearned public. It is impossible to say that a man with an unusually large head must be a man of unusual mental capacity, because the quantity of mental capacity depends on many other factors besides quantity of brain. It not only depends upon the sinuous creasing of the brain-surface here described, which can in nowise be detected by an examination of the outside of the head, but it also depends largely, as Mr. Lewes well reminds us, upon the very important element of vascular irrigation. "Many individual variations in mental character depend on the variations in the calibre of the cerebral and carotid trunks—and many variations in the intellectual, emotive, and active tendencies depend on the *relative* importance of the cerebral and carotid trunks. The *energy* of the brain depends mainly on the *calibre* of its arteries; the special *directions* of that energy depend on the *territorial distribution*."—*Problems of Life and Mind*, vol. i. p. 151. Again, the quantity of available mental energy which can be evolved in a given period of time, depends, to a very great extent, upon the efficiency with which the blood is supplied with oxygen and freed from carbonic acid; so that mental capacity not only depends upon capacity of brain, but also upon capacity of lungs and liver. In short, a thorough examination shows that while Mind is most directly correlated with Brain, it is indirectly but closely correlated with the entire organism. So that the attempt to estimate individual differences in mental capacity by referring to brain-size alone, is an utter absurdity.

[1] Maudsley, *Physiology and Pathology of Mind*, p. 55.

Between these fibres and cells there are differences of molecular structure implying differences in molecular activity. While the matter composing a cell is built up in enormously complex aggregates of molecules, wholly unshielded from external disturbance, the nerve-matter of a fibre is protected throughout its entire length by a membranous sheath. And while it is probable that the action going on in a cell consists in the continual fall of unstably arranged molecules into a state of more stable equilibrium, from which a fresh rush of blood is continually raising them to their former unstable state; it is probable that the action going on in a fibre consists in the successive isomeric transformations and retransformations of the systems of molecules which make up the fibre. These conclusions are quite probable, though not proven. But it is entirely proved that a cell is a place where nervous energy is liberated, while a fibre is a path along which nervous energy is transmitted.

Bearing all this in mind, it appears that the cerebrum and cerebellum are places where countless centres are constantly liberating nervous energy, and where this liberated energy is continually flowing along definite channels and from one centre to another. But to make the statement complete, we should add that much of the liberated energy is drafted off along centrifugal fibres into the corpora striata, whence it flows into the medulla and spinal centres, and is thus diffused over the body. Omitting the further consideration of these circumstances, let us inquire into the meaning of this unceasing interchange of molecular motion between the innumerable cells crowded together in the cerebrum and cerebellum. In other words, what are the functions of these supreme ganglia?

That their functions are not in any degree the direct coordination of sensations and movements, would appear from the fact that these direct coordinations are already made in the spinal cord and in the medulla. All the muscular adjust-

ments made in the trunk and limbs are effected either directly by the spinal centres, or indirectly by the sympathetic ganglia in cooperation with the spinal centres. The medulla coordinates all these muscular adjustments with the muscular adjustments of the face, and with the impressions received from the specialized organs of sense. It is therefore highly improbable that the supreme ganglia can be in any way directly concerned with these coordinations. And the improbability is increased by the fact that the cerebrum and cerebellum are as destitute of sensation as the free ends of the finger-nails. Scratch one of the spinal centres, and the result is tetanus. Scratch the medulla, and the whole body is thrown into terrible convulsions. But the cerebrum and cerebellum may be scratched and sliced without pain or convulsion. They take heed only of those impressions which are communicated to them indirectly. Countless multitudes of nerve-fibres coming up from the medulla, are gathered together in the corpora striata; whence other fibres, continuing from them, radiate to the innumerable cells of which the supreme ganglia are composed.

We must conclude, therefore, that the functions of the cerebrum and cerebellum are comprised in the further compounding of sensory impressions already compounded in the medulla. And as such compounding involves the reproduction of impressions received in lower centres, and also involves the coordination of past with present impressions, we may say that the supreme ganglia are the seats of the higher psychical life,—of memory, reason, emotion, and volition. Dr. Maudsley has thus appropriately termed them the *ideational* centres. But between the functions of the two, thus closely related, there is nevertheless a difference. Although the precise determination of the way in which ideational functions are shared between the two centres, has long remained a puzzling problem, there is good reason for believing that Mr. Spencer has solved the difficulty by

assigning to the cerebellum the office of doubly-compound coordination in space, and to the cerebrum the office of doubly-compound coordination in time. The facts of comparative anatomy, and of comparative psychology, so far as known, are in harmony with this opinion. We saw in the chapter on Life and Mind that the extension of the correspondence in time at first goes on parallel with the extension of the correspondence in space; the increased area over which the organism can act being the measure of its increased capacity for adapting its actions to longer and longer sequences in the environment. But we saw also that in the human race the extension of the correspondence in time has gone on far more rapidly than the extension in space; the most striking characteristic of intellectual progress being the ability of civilized man to adapt his inferences and actions to remote contingencies. Side by side with these facts, comparative anatomy shows us that the cerebrum and cerebellum at first keep pace with each other in growth; but, as we reach those higher mammals which exhibit some degree of foresight, we find the cerebrum outgrowing the cerebellum and overlapping it; while in man the growth of the cerebrum has been so great as to render comparatively insignificant all other changes in the nervous system. With the enormous cerebrum of civilized man we may further contrast the preponderant cerebellum in those carnivorous birds whose psychical life consists chiefly in the coordination of those extremely complex and remote space-relations involved in the swooping upon prey from great distances. The human cerebellum is absolutely larger than that of such birds; but its smallness relatively to the cerebrum is a fact parallel with the simplicity of the space-relations which man coordinates, as compared with the time-relations. Among the latter are comprised all our ideas of cause, motion, progress,—in a word, all manifestations of force which involve the relation of sequence. But these ideas

make up by far the largest and most heterogeneous portion of our psychical life.

I am inclined to regard these considerations as very powerful ones,—and there are several others which lead to the same conclusion. To present the case properly would require a whole chapter; but it is not essential for our present purpose that the question should be decided. Whether Mr. Spencer's view of the respective functions of the cerebrum and cerebellum be correct or not, it equally remains true that the class of functions shared by the two are ideational functions. They compound in double, triple, quadruple, or in far higher multiples, the sensory elements already simply compounded by the medulla. And it is in this compound grouping of impressions, past and present, according to their various degrees of likeness and unlikeness, that thought and emotion, the highest phases of psychical life, consist.

A moment ago we asked, what is the meaning of the ceaseless interchange of molecular motion which goes on among the innumerable cells of the brain? We now see what is the meaning of it, for there can be but one meaning. The continual redistribution of nervous energy among the cells, is the objective side of the process of which the subjective side is the recompounding of impressions. If we may for a moment unduly simplify the matter, it may be said that for every renewed grouping of impressions, for every revived association of ideas, there is a nervous discharge between two or more cells, along formerly-used sets of transit-fibres; and for every fresh grouping of impressions, for every new connection of ideas, there is a discharge along new transit lines. In reality the matter cannot be so simple as this, since, as we shall presently see, the maintenance of consciousness implies a state of tension between many simultaneous discharges. But however great the complexity, the principle remains the same.

If it be objected to this view that it obliges us to assume a vast amount of differentiation and integration in the brain, during the lifetime of single individuals, it may be replied that the assumption is fully sustained, both by sound deduction and by observation. Not only does the brain increase in size and heterogeneity during the first twenty-five years of life, but ordinarily it increases in heterogeneity, and often in size, for many years later; and in some cases it increases in heterogeneity until the end of life. The brain of a young child is in homogeneity like the brain of an ape; the furrows are shallow, symmetrical, and few in number. With advancing years they increase in number, depth, and irregularity; and the increase is most marked in those persons who do the most brain-work. In the brains of five very eminent men examined by Wagner, the heterogeneity of surface is described as quite astonishing. Such facts prove that the operations of thought work strongly-marked structural changes in individual brains, in the course of a few years. And as these strongly-marked changes are but the summing-up of countless little changes in the arrangements of cells and fibres, the inference is inevitable that such little changes must be going on all the time. This is the testimony of observation, and deduction might have taught us to expect as much; since the molecules of nerve-tissue are chemically by far the most unstable molecules known to science, ever ready to undergo metamorphosis and arrange themselves in new groups. Waste and repair go on more rapidly in the brain than in any other part of the body; the cerebrum, weighing between three and four pounds, receives at each pulsation one-fifth of all the blood sent from the heart, and if the supply is stopped for an instant, consciousness ceases. Where nutritive change is so excessively rapid, such structural changes as are involved in the continual setting-up of new transit-lines, must be readily effected. And quite in harmony with this course of inference is the fact that, when cerebral

nutrition is notably retarded, as by the anæmia and feeble circulation of disease or old age, new associations of ideas become difficult or even impossible.

To sum up this whole preliminary argument:—the cerebrum and cerebellum are organs whose function is ideation or the generation of ideal feelings and thoughts. They are organs made up of a tissue in which chemical changes occur with unparalleled rapidity. We cannot see these changes go on, but we can equally well infer their general character when we have examined the chemical properties and molecular structure of the tissue in which they occur. Microscopic and chemical examination of this tissue shows that these chemical changes must consist in a perpetual transfer of energy from one cell to another along transit-lines composed of nerve-threads. Bear in mind that the cell does not average more than one ten-thousandth of an inch in diameter, and that the quantity of matter contained in a transit-line is almost infinitely small. Now since the cerebrum and cerebellum are, subjectively speaking, places where ideation is continually going on; and since they are, objectively speaking, places where nerve-cells are continually sending undulations back and forth along transit-lines; the inference seems forced upon us, that the transfer of an undulation from one cell to another is the objective accompaniment of each subjective unit of feeling of which thoughts and emotions are made up. And if this be so, it becomes a mere truism to say that the formation of a new association involves the establishment of a new transit-line, or set of transit-lines, while the revival of an old association involves merely the recurrence of motion along old transit-lines. That this is merely a hypothesis, I readily grant. Nevertheless it is a verifiable hypothesis; it is in harmony with all that we know of nerve-action; and it may be held provisionally until some better one is propounded. When we proceed to see how many phenomena it explains, we shall

be, I think, quite ready to admit that, if it does not contain the whole truth, it must at least contain a foreshadowing of the truth.

For we have now to note that, by a deduction from an established law of molecular motion, this hypothetical law of nervous action can be shown to explain that law of association which subjective analysis proclaims as the fundamental law of intelligence. In the chapter on Life and Mind, we saw that the chief business of psychology is to answer the question how there comes to be established in the mind a relation between two subjective states X and Y, answering to a relation between two phenomena A and B in the environment. How is it that there is a subjective relation between the idea of sweetness and the group of ideas comprised in the visual perception of a peach, answering in some way to the objective relation between the coexistent properties of the peach, so that the presentation of the one to the cephalic ganglia is inevitably accompanied by the representation of the other? This question lies at the bottom of psychology, and we have now to see how it is to be answered. The answer will lead us through a portion of the domain of molecular physics, and will incidentally give us a hint concerning the genesis of nervous systems.

In the chapter on Matter, Motion, and Force, it was shown that all motion takes place along the line of least resistance, whether the motion be the movement of a mass of matter through a resisting medium, or the passage of a series of undulations through the molecules of an aggregate. Let us reconsider this truth in one of its concrete applications.

When a wave of molecular motion traverses a mass of matter for the first time, the line of least resistance will of course be determined by the intimate structure of the mass. But now mark what happens. Immediately after the passage of the wave, the intimate structure of the mass, in the vicinity of the line along which the wave has travelled, is

different from what it was a moment ago. The passage of the wave has pushed a linear series of molecules out of position, and a short time must elapse before these molecules can return to their positions. Therefore if the first wave is instantly followed by a second, starting from the same point, the line already traversed will be the line of least resistance, even more decidedly than before. The second wave will encounter less resistance than the first wave, because it will find its work of altering the positions of the molecules already partly done for it. Thus, according to the molecular mobility of the matter in question, the transit of succeeding waves, along the line once established, will rapidly become less and less hindered. And the process must go on either until the inertia of the molecules along the transit-line opposes a minimum of resistance to the passage of the wave, or even until the energy given out by the molecules in changing position adds to the momentum of the wave. In either case there is established a permanent line of least resistance, along which all subsequent waves that start from the same point must travel. The most familiar illustration of this process is afforded by the facts of magnetization, which show "that the establishment of undulations along certain lines determines their continuance along those lines."[1] The case of liquid matter flowing through solid matter—as when currents of rain-water, percolating through loose soil, gradually break away obstructing particles and excavate small channels which ultimately widen and deepen into river-beds—is a case in which similar dynamic principles are involved. In all these cases, "if we confine our attention to that part of the motion which escaping transformation continues its course,

[1] An illustration of this principle is perhaps to be found in the mellowing of old violins. According to Prof. Tyndall, "the very act of playing has a beneficial influence; apparently constraining the molecules of the wood, which in the first instance were refractory, to conform at last to the requirements of the vibrating strings." *On Sound*, p. 90. As Dr. Maudsley would say, "musical residua" remain in the molecular structure of the wood.

then it is a corollary from the persistence of force that as much of this remaining motion as is taken up in changing the positions of the units, must leave these by so much less able to obstruct subsequent motion in the same direction."[1]

Now in the case of organic bodies, the enormously complex molecular changes involved in nutrition are such as to aid in the setting-up of the most perfect transit-lines. In an inorganic mass the molecules have comparatively little mobility, and they do not leave their connections from moment to moment, to be instantly replaced by new molecules. But the complex clusters of molecules which make up living tissue possess immense mobility, and they are continually falling to pieces and getting built up again. Consequently the repeated passage of waves either of fluid matter or of molecular motion along a definite line of least resistance, not only changes the positions of the molecular clusters, but also modifies the nutritive changes by which the temporary equilibrium of the clusters is restored. Instead of a set of relatively homogeneous molecules, which are simply pushed aside and then tend to oscillate back again, the advancing wave encounters a heterogeneous edifice of molecules, which tumbles to pieces and is instantly rebuilt. But in the rebuilding the force exerted by the advancing wave has to be expended; and the result is that in the rebuilt cluster there is a surplus tension exerted in the very direction in which the waves are travelling. The transit-lines thus become far more permeable than any which can be established in inorganic bodies. The energy given out by the decomposing cluster of molecules adds to the momentum of the wave; so that the line of least resistance becomes to a certain extent a

[1] Spencer, *First Principles*, p. 248. Thus, though Mr. Mill is justified in saying (*Inaugural Discourse*, p. 62) that "physiology is the first science in which we [distinctly] recognize the influence of habit—the tendency of something to happen again merely because it has happened before"—yet, as we here see, the phenomena of habit are foreshadowed in the inorganic world. An admirable instance of that continuity among phenomena which is everywhere implied by the theory of evolution.

line of traction. A good illustration is afforded by the gradual evolution of the circulatory system as we ascend in the animal scale. In the lowest animals which possess any nutritive fluid perceptibly distinct from the protoplasmic jelly of which their bodies are composed, this fluid percolates here and there at seeming random, its course being determined by local pressures, just as in the case of rain-water trickling through the ground. Now as we ascend to higher animals, we find that the nutritive fluid has wrought for itself certain channels, to which it confines itself, and which gradually become more and more definite in direction, and more and more clearly demarcated from the adjacent portions of tissue. Until, when we reach animals of a high type of structure, we find the blood coursing through permanent channels, the walls of which contract and expand in such a way as to assist the blood in its progress. A similar explanation is to be given of the genesis of the contractile fibres of muscle, as due to the continuance of molecular undulations along certain lines.

When we come to the nervous system, we find most completely realized all the conditions requisite for the rapid establishment of permanent transit-lines. The clusters of molecules of which nerve-tissue is composed, are more heterogeneously compounded than any other known systems of molecules; and the alternate pulling to pieces and putting together of these clusters, which we call nutrition, goes on here with unparalleled rapidity. Of all known substances, nerve is the most changeable, the most impressible, the most readily adaptable to changing combinations of incident forces,—in short, the most easily differentiable and integrable. Hence we find that those long transit-lines, known as afferent and efferent nerves, are not only so constituted that a wave of disturbance set up at one end is immensely increased before it reaches the other end, but are also protected by enveloping clusters of molecules in such a

way that none of the transmitted motion is allowed to escape laterally. Ease of transit is here witnessed at its maximum.

Making use of these theorems of transcendental physics, and applying to the problem his vast and accurate knowledge of biological details, Mr. Spencer has propounded a theory of the genesis of nervous systems of all orders of complexity, which, whether entirely or only partially true, must be regarded as one of his most brilliant achievements. In the lately-published "Physical Synthesis," which concludes the first volume of his "Principles of Psychology," Mr. Spencer shows that the irritability which characterizes the entire surface of the lowest animals, and which probably consists in the isomeric transformation of colloidal clusters of molecules distributed over the surface, must gradually become concentrated in certain definite transit-lines, just as the circulation of a nutritive fluid becomes confined to certain channels: while the collision of waves which takes place wherever two or more of these transit-fibres inosculate, must result in such chemical changes, and in the gradual formation of such a structure, as characterize nerve-centres. But the exposition, when carried into details, is altogether too abstruse to be profitably presented here, nor is it necessary for our present purpose. The explanation of the laws of association only requires that, starting with some kind of nervous system as already established, we should examine the character of the nutritive changes set up within it by environing agencies.

The foregoing argument shows us that the most prominent characteristic of such changes is the formation of transit-lines between neighbouring cells; and we have seen that the more frequently a wave of molecular disturbance passes along any such transit-line, the more easily will it pass, and the more difficult will it be to divert it into any other transit-line. Hence in any complex aggregate of cells and fibres,

like the human brain, we may expect to find a countless number of transit-lines, of all degrees of permeability. Those which have been oftenest traversed will be the most permeable, and those which are traversed only at rare intervals will be but slightly permeable; while the passage of a nervous discharge in a new direction will involve the differentiation of a new line of transit.

Now subjective psychology furnishes us with an exact parallel to this state of things. The profound analysis of conscious changes carried on by the English school of psychology since the time of Hobbes, and accepted by the Kantian school in all save a few very important instances —which we shall presently see to be similarly explicable— has ended in the conclusion that states of consciousness cohere with a strength dependent upon the frequency with which they have been repeated in experience. In other words, "the persistence of the connection between states of consciousness is proportionate to the persistence of the connection between the agencies to which they answer. This fundamental law of association is illustrated by such familiar truths as the following:—"that phenomena wholly unrelated in our experience, we have no tendency to think of together; that where a certain phenomenon has occurred in many relations, we usually imagine it as recurring in the relation in which it has most frequently occurred; that when we have witnessed many recurrences of a certain relation we come to have a strong belief in that relation; that if a relation has been daily experienced throughout life with scarcely an exception, it becomes difficult for us to conceive it as otherwise—to break the connection between the states of consciousness representing it; and that where a relation has been perpetually repeated in our experience with absolute uniformity, we are entirely disabled from conceiving the negation of it."[1]

[1] Spencer, *Principles of Psychology*, vol. i. p. 421

The correspondence between the subjective and the objective sides of the phenomena is thus complete, and the increasing complication of cell and fibre in the brain, from infancy to old age, is seen to have a psychological meaning. If the acquisition of a new idea is attended by the passage of a wave of molecular motion along a new path; and if recollection is a state of consciousness attending the transmission of a later wave along the same path; we have an adequate physical interpretation of the fact that the repetition of an idea is favourable to the recollection of it. And we have also the physical interpretation of habit and prejudice. Molecular motions that have been repeatedly transmitted between particular groups of nerve-cells, end by establishing more or less intricate webs of transit-lines which cannot be obliterated. No effort can prevent their occasional recurrence along these lines, or establish a new plexus of transit-lines, involving the derangement of the old ones. Late in life, when the ratio of repair to waste is greatly diminished, when the nutrition of the cerebral tissue is impaired, when the pulling to pieces and putting together of molecular clusters in which nutrition consists goes on slowly, then the formation of new sets of transit-lines becomes especially difficult; and hence, as we say, the shaking off of old habits and prejudices, and the acquiring of new and strange ideas, is next to impossible. It is proverbially hard to teach an old dog new tricks. We may here also see why it is impossible to learn or to carry on complicated thinking when in a state of anæmia: the nutritive changes go on too slowly. Changes in memory further illustrate the theory. In youth, when the excess of repair over waste is at the maximum, but few discharges through any transit-fibre are needful in order to work a permanent nutritive change, setting up a line of communication which shall last through life: hence learning is easy and rapid, and memory is powerful. In old age, when waste is slightly in excess of repair,

and both are at the minimum, a great many discharges are necessary for the achievement of any permanent nutritive change: hence learning is slow and difficult, and memory is feeble. And hence—what is most significant of all—the old man does not remember recent events, while he remembers very well what happened in his youth, when his rate of nutrition was rapid. These and countless similar facts show us that a state of consciousness and a nutritive change in the cephalic ganglia are correlated like the subjective and objective faces of the same thing. And thus are explained the many facts which in the seventh chapter were brought forward in illustration of the transformations of vital energy,—such as the facts that consciousness ceases the instant the carbonic acid in the blood has attained a certain ratio to the oxygen; that much thinking entails a great excretion of alkaline phosphates; and that prolonged mental exertion is followed by a bodily fatigue and a keen appetite not essentially different from the fatigue and hunger which follow muscular exercise.

Regarding it now as provisionally established that an association of ideas is dependent upon the formation of a transit-line between two nerve-cells, and that the more often the fibrous path is traversed the more indissoluble will be the association, let us proceed briefly to apply this doctrine to the explanation of sundry psychical phenomena. Now as we begin to examine the simplest psychical phenomena—those of reflex action and instinct—we are met by the seeming difficulty that indissolubly connected psychical states occur where the corresponding objective relation has *never* been repeated within the experience of the individual. Instinctive adjustments of inner to outer relations are apparently made without any help from experience. Moths and butterflies take to wing immediately on emerging from the envelope of the chrysalis; "a fly-catcher, immediately after its exit from the egg, has been known to peck at and capture

an insect"; and "a young pointer will point at a covey the first time he is taken afield." But in such cases as these, where the cohesion of psychical states has not been determined by the experience of the individual, it has nevertheless been determined by the experience of the race. That the repetition of ancestral experiences must end in the automatic cohesion of psychical states, is both demonstrable *d priori* and illustrated by many facts. Birds living in islands uninhabited by men will not fly away when approached by travellers, having none of that instinctive fear which "continued experience of human enmity has wrought" in other birds. Yet in a few generations, these birds will acquire the same instinctive fear. In many cases the offspring of a dog that has been taught to beg will beg instinctively; and various peculiarities of demeanour, carefully impressed by education upon sporting dogs, are manifested without education by their descendants. Indeed it is familiar to breeders that the dispositions and instincts of domestic animals can be to a certain extent modified by training and selection, no less than their physical constitutions.[1]

The physical explanation of the automatic cohesion of psychical states implied in hereditary instinct, is not difficult at this stage of our inquiry. When the experience of many past generations has uniformly contributed to establish a certain arrangement of transit-lines in the chief ganglia of the animal, there must be a hereditary tendency for such

[1] "How strongly these domestic instincts, habits, and dispositions are inherited, and how curiously they become mingled, is well shown when different breeds of dogs are crossed. Thus it is known that a cross with a bull-dog has affected for many generations the courage and obstinacy of greyhounds; and a cross with a greyhound has given to a whole family of shepherd-dogs a tendency to hunt hares. These domestic instincts, when thus tested by crossing, resemble natural instincts, which in a like manner become curiously blended together, and for a long period exhibit traces of the instincts of either parent: for example Le Roy describes a dog, whose great-grandfather was a wolf, and this dog showed a trace of its wild parentage only in one way, by not coming in a straight line to his master, when called."—Darwin, *Origin of Species*, 6th edit, p. 210.

transit-lines to develop by the mere process of nutrition. And where the psychical life is very simple, and but little varied from generation to generation, a nervous system embodying certain organized aptitudes will be transmitted as surely as the muscular or vascular system is transmitted. Nervous discharges will run along pre-established transit-lines as inevitably as in human beings the nervous discharges which regulate the respiratory and alimentary movements run in permanent channels. The character of the process is best exemplified in *reflex action*, the simplest form of psychical life. In reflex action, which is unaccompanied by consciousness, a single inner relation is adjusted to a single outer relation. For the simpler kinds of reflex action nothing is needed but what is called a *nervous arc*,—that is, an afferent nerve, a ganglion, and an efferent nerve. When a person sound asleep draws away a limb that is touched, the impression is simply carried along an afferent nerve to one of the spinal ganglia, and thence reflected along an efferent nerve to the muscle which moves the limb. The assistance of the brain is not needed. In many animals the limbs thus respond to stimuli after the head has been cut off or the brain sliced away. This kind of psychical life, which is but one degree removed from purely physical life, is all that is manifested by those lowly-organized animals whose nervous system consist of simple arcs. So thoroughly physical is this group of phenomena that it may seem almost inappropriate to call it psychical: nevertheless it forms the transition from the one kind of life to the other. It is the lowly beginning from which higher forms of psychical activity arise.

Now in reflex action, as it is exemplified alike in the rhythmical movements of our heart, lungs, stomach, and other viscera, and in the contraction of a polyp's tentacle when food comes against it, we see a series of nervous discharges which are automatically directed along certain definite transit-lines. The lines of least resistance have become per-

manently organized in the animal structure, and they are transmitted, with the accompanying capacities of action, from generation to generation. Here we see "indissolubly connected psychical states existing where there are perpetually repeated experiences of the external relations to which they answer."

The phenomena of *instinct* are more distinctly psychical than those of reflex action. "While simple reflex action is common to the internal visceral processes and to the processes of external adjustment, instinct is not. There are no instincts displayed by the kidneys, the lungs, the liver: they occur only among the actions of that nervo-muscular apparatus which is the agent of psychical life." Instinct, moreover, implies the coordination of a large number of stimuli with the answering movements, and herein is its chief difference from reflex action,—a difference in degree only. The newly-hatched fly-catcher, in seizing a fly, shows "an exact appreciation of distance, as well as a power of precisely regulating the muscular movements in accordance with it." The number of impressions and movements here coordinated is so considerable that it would take several pages to describe them thoroughly. Here certain systems of transit-lines, involved in the establishment of a correspondence in space, are wrought by nutrition in the animal's nervous system, so completely that when the outer relation occurs the discharge instantly takes place along the pre-established channels, and the adjustment is made. There is an intricate compounding of reflex actions, involving the assistance of the brain; for if the cerebellum be sliced, the fly-catching can no longer be performed. Intricate, however, as the combination is, it is a special and unvarying one which has been continually repeated during the whole lifetime of countless ancestral fly-catchers, so that there is nothing strange in the fact that it is completely organized at birth. The principle is the same as in the simpler phenomena of reflex action. Here, as before,

extending the experience theory to the entire race, we see "indissolubly connected psychical states existing where there are perpetually repeated experiences of the external relations to which they answer."

Though the higher kinds of instinct, in which the supreme ganglia cooperate, are probably accompanied by a vague consciousness, yet in the main the processes which we have just described must be regarded as automatic. Let us now notice what must occur when the correspondence between inner and outer relations has become quite complex and special. As Mr. Spencer has pointed out, "phenomena become less frequent in proportion as they become more complex; and hence the experiences of them can never be so numerous as are the experiences of simple phenomena. The relation between a passing obscuration and a living body, recurs oftener than the relation between a certain degree of obscuration and danger, or than the relation between a certain other degree of obscuration and food. Again, each of these relations is more general than the relation between a particular size and form of visual impression and an object of a particular class. And again, this relation is more general than that between a particular size, form, and colour of visual impression, and a certain species of that class."[1] From this it follows that a lowly-organized animal, in which there is established a correspondence only with the most general environing relations, and which therefore has experience only of such most general relations, has at the same time a uniform experience which maintains a complete cohesion among its simple psychical states. On the other hand, a highly-organized animal, in which there are established correspondences with many complex and special relations, will have a varied experience, and at the same time a varying cohesion among its complex psychical states. While the most general relations which it experiences will also be the most frequent,

[1] Spencer, *Principles of Psychology*, vol. i. p. 441.

and while sundry special relations (as in the seizing of its prey by the fly-catcher) will be extremely frequent, there are many other special relations of which the experience will be much less frequent. And accordingly, along with the perfectly coherent psychical states generated by the former, there will be a congeries of less coherent psychical states generated by the latter. Or, to restate the case in physiological language:—While in the lower organism there will be a number of transit-lines permanently established, and scarcely any tendency toward the formation of new ones; on the other hand, in the higher organism, there will be a number of permanent transit-lines and a number of such lines in process of formation, along with a continual tendency toward the establishment of new ones. The consequences of this are obvious. In becoming more and more complex, the correspondences become less and less instantaneous and decided. "They gradually lose their distinctly automatic character, and that which we call Instinct merges into something higher."

For as long as the psychical life consists solely in the passage of nervous undulations along permanent pre-established channels, there is no consciousness. Consciousness, as already shown, implies continual discrimination, or the continual recognition of likenesses and differences; and this process implies a rapid succession of changes in the supreme ganglia. Now this rapid succession of changes occurs when a vast number of relations are brought together in a single ganglion, or group of ganglia, as in the cerebrum, in order to be compared with each other. Besides this, consciousness implies a certain lapse of time during which impressions persist; and there is no such persistence in reflex action, or in the lower forms of instinct, where the molecular disturbance constituting a nervous impression is instantly drafted off along the pre-established channels. Such persistence occurs only when a number of impressions are brought together in

a single ganglion, where an appreciable time must elapse before they are carried off each along its own set of transit-lines. For example, when you tickle or pinch the arm of a person asleep, the arm is at first withdrawn by simple reflex action: the ordinary channel, through the afferent nerve to the spinal centre and back again through the efferent nerve to the limb, suffices to carry off all the molecular disturbance, —and there is no consciousness of the irritation or of the resulting contraction. But if the pinching be frequently repeated, so that the disturbance is generated faster than it can be thus drafted off, the surplus is sent up through a centripetal fibre from the spinal ganglion to the brain; and some dreaming ensues, or perhaps a fretful sound is emitted. If the impression be kept up long enough, there is full consciousness of it, and the person awakes. Now the rise of consciousness implied in the dreaming and waking is due to the persistence in the cerebrum of a molecular disturbance which is not at once drafted off through the proper centrifugal fibres.

Obviously, therefore, when the number of impressions sent in to the brain from moment to moment exceeds the number of thoroughly permeable channels which have been formed there, so that there is a brief period of tension during which occur the nutritive changes implied in the transmission of the disturbance through the appropriate channels, then there arise the phenomena of conscious intelligence. For mark what must happen. In the *first* place, the persistence of the impressions enables them to be consciously felt, either pleasurably or painfully; so that there is the germ of Emotion. *Secondly*, the disturbance tends to propagate itself along various permeable transit-lines, so that there is a revived association of ideas, or what we call Memory. *Thirdly*, there is an integration of the present impressions with such past ones as they resemble, and a differentiation of them from such past ones as they do not resemble; and this

comparison of present with past impressions, dependent on memory, implies classification, and is the germ of what we call Perception and Reasoning. *Fourthly*, there is, in the case of many kinds of impressions, a period of tension during which it becomes determined along what set of centrifugal fibres the surplus disturbance shall be drafted off, and here we have the primitive form of Volition. Thus the various phases of conscious psychical life—which we call emotion, memory, reason, and volition—arise as soon as there begins to elapse an appreciable time between the accumulation of molecular disturbance in a group of cephalic nerve-cells, and its discharge along the proper transit-fibres. And this state of things, which is not possible in simple nervous systems which only respond instinctively or by reflex action to a few general relations in the environment, becomes possible in those compound nervous systems which respond to a great number of infrequent and special relations. For the establishment of inner relations, answering to these infrequent and special outer relations, involves a lapse of time during which numerous diverse impressions are getting distributed through various transit-lines hitherto little used. When, as in the fully-developed human cerebrum, a vast number of infrequent and special relations are continually set up, there is a maximum of nutritive change, there is a maximum of time during which impressions simultaneously coming in may be compared and classified, and there is a maximum of consciousness.

This explanation of the way in which the various phases of conscious psychical life arise, is fully confirmed by the way in which they disappear when actions at first consciously performed become instinctive. The confirmation is so complete as to afford a very strong proof of the truth of the hypothesis. Many of the actions performed by civilized man are designated by psychologists as "secondarily automatic." That is, they are at first performed with

the assistance of reason, volition, and conscious memory, and they are attended by feelings of pleasure or pain. But after a while they are performed without the aid of reason, volition, or conscious memory, and they are not attended by pleasurable or painful feelings. In becoming instinctive, they lapse partially or entirely from consciousness. The child in learning to walk and talk, must will each movement and rationally coordinate it with other movements in order to attain the desired end. But the man, in walking and talking, is unconscious of the separate movements, and volition serves only to set them going. In learning to read, the child must consciously remember each letter, combine it with others into a word, and associate the word with the thing signified; and this last process is repeated in later years when we learn foreign languages. But in reading our own language, or a foreign one which has been thoroughly learned, the association of words and things is automatic. In reading an English book, in which French quotations are inserted, one frequently passes from one language to the other and back again, without noticing the change, if the attention be concentrated on the subject-matter. In learning to play the piano, there is at first a vast amount of conscious association between the written notes, the key-board, and the muscular adjustments of the fingers, wrists, and arms; but an accomplished pianist will play a familiar piece while his attention is directed to other matters. The case is similar with writing, and indeed with all habitual actions which require nervo-muscular coordination. In many cases, moreover, the intervention of conscious attention only impairs the accuracy of adjustment. In billiard-playing and rifle-shooting, the aim is usually impaired if we stop to think about it; and on the piano it is almost impossible to play triple notes with one hand and double notes with the other if we attempt to measure out the time.

Purely intellectual acts also become to a certain extent automatic with practice, as was indeed implied in some of the foregoing illustrations. Not only the combination of words into a sentence, but the combination of sentences into a proposition, and the combination of propositions into a theory, is effected more and more rapidly, until the process hardly attracts attention. In a complicated exposition like the present, numerous scientific theorems, at first laboriously comprehended one by one, are wrapped up together and thrown into some subordinate clause of a sentence, the total being so obvious as not to withdraw the attention from the main current of thought while writing. In such facts we have a partial explanation of many of the phenomena of what is called unconscious or "sub-conscious" thinking. And thus, too, are to be explained those sudden flashes of insight, scientific or poetical, which in early times were attributed to inspiration or dictation from without. Obviously without a good deal of such automatic acting and thinking, we could achieve but little in art or science. We should never become good pianists if we had to keep paying attention to all the requisite muscular adjustments; and science would advance but slowly if at each step of an intricate inquiry in dynamics it were necessary to stop and reflect upon the elementary laws of matter and motion.

The physical interpretation of these secondary automatic processes is not difficult, according to the hypothesis here expounded. During the process of learning, there is an extensive formation of new transit-lines, and consequently an appreciable interval between the accumulation of molecular disturbance in the cerebral cells and its discharge. Impressions persist long enough to be compared together, and accordingly there is reason and there is volition. There is a maximum of consciousness, because there is a maximum duration of the nutritive changes, and hence weariness soon

follows; cerebral nutrition entailing greater waste than occurs in any other part of the system. But with constant repetition the resistance to the passage of undulations along the new transit-lines disappears entirely. Nutrition has so modified them that, as above explained, they become lines of traction instead of lines of resistance. As we say, nothing can prevent the one group of ideas or movements from following the other. The discharges are made instantly, and along with a minimum duration of nutritive change there is a minimum of consciousness. The combinations become permanently organized in the brain-structure, and in becoming permanently organized they become instinctive or automatic.

We may now also begin to understand why it is that in man the organization of instincts, primary and secondary, is continued through the early years of life, while in the other animals the majority of the instincts are already organized at birth. The distinction is not an absolute one, as many of the higher vertebrates, both birds and mammals, and in a marked degree the anthropoid apes, cannot take care of themselves immediately after birth, though they soon become able to do so. The lower we descend the animal scale, the more completely organized is the psychical life of the newly-born organism. The reason is obviously to be found in the greater speciality and complexity, and the consequent relative infrequency, of the coordinations made by the highest animals, and especially by man. When, for example, we put forth the hand to grasp an object, the muscular adjustments are as instinctive as those of the fly-catcher pouncing on an insect; "volition being concerned merely in setting the process going." But with us, the impressions which we receive and the motions which we make are endlessly varied, and the complex combinations of them occur *severally* with less frequency than is the case with the simpler combinations formed by lower animals. They are accordingly not

coordinated before birth, though they are easily coordinated during childhood.[1]

A great number of psychical phenomena are thus satisfactorily explained by the hypothesis. But one further service, and a most signal one, is rendered by it; and this we must briefly indicate, in accordance with previous promises, before leaving the subject. The view of cerebral action here adopted settles the long-vexed question between the Lockian and Kantian schools as to the sources of knowledge; and the verdict, while partly favourable to each of these schools, is not wholly favourable to either. Let us reconsider the portion of our hypothesis which bears upon this question.

It follows from the general principles involved in the foregoing exposition, that the peculiar intellectual activity of any parent, by modifying the nutrition of his cerebral tissue, must impress itself upon the unstimulated and half-developed brain of his infant offspring. Eliminating the effects wrought in it by countless environing circumstances, we may say that the infant brain just as surely tends to develop transit-lines similar to those in the parental brain, as the infant face tends to develop muscular peculiarities of expression like those characteristic of the parental face. And while the tendency is so slight as to count for little or nothing in the case of the more complex and infrequent associations of ideas, it must be a resistless tendency in the case of those nerve-connections which answer to associations involved in every act of experience,—as, for example, those concerned in building up our conceptions of space, time, force, and causation. A concise restatement of the case will now lead us at once to our conclusion. While ancestral experience impresses upon the brain a nutritive

[1] In the concluding chapter of this Part, I shall endeavour to show that this origination and prolongation of the period of infancy, which is the effect of increasing intelligence, is in turn the proximate cause of the genesis of social relations and of ethical feelings, and thus, indirectly, of the entire intellectual and moral supremacy of man.

tendency toward the formation of certain special nerve-connections, individual experience tends now to assist and now to check the inherited tendency. And so the number and direction of transit-lines in any brain is due to the cooperation of innumerable ancestral and individual experiences. Locke was therefore wrong in calling the infant's mind a blank sheet upon which experience is to write knowledge. The mind of the infant cannot be compared to a blank sheet, but rather to a sheet already written over here and there with invisible ink, which tends to show itself as the chemistry of experience supplies the requisite conditions. Or, dropping metaphor, the infant's mind is correlated with the functions of a complex mass of nerve-tissue which already has certain definite nutritive tendencies. On the other hand, the school of Leibnitz and Kant was wrong in assuming a kind of intuitional knowledge not ultimately due to experience. For the ideas formerly called innate or intuitional are the results of nutritive tendencies in the cerebral tissue, which have been strengthened by the uniform experience of countless generations, until they have become as resistless as the tendency of the dorsal line of the embryo to develope into a vertebral column. The strength of Locke's position lay in the assertion that all knowledge is ultimately derived from experience,—that is, from the intercourse between the organism and the environment. The strength of Kant's position lay in the recognition of the fact that the brain has definite tendencies, even at birth. The Doctrine of Evolution harmonizes these two seemingly-opposite views, by showing us that in learning we are merely acquiring latent capacities of reproducing ideas; and that beneath these capacities lie more or less powerful nutritive tendencies, which are transmissible from parent to child.

I believe that the last difficulties which may have hovered about the doctrine of the Test of Truth, expounded in the

third chapter of our Prolegomena, are now swept away. It must be by this time quite clear that the inconceivability-test and the experience-test are merely the obverse faces of the same thing. An association of subject and predicate, which answers to an objective relation of which the experience has been absolutely uniform, must be absolutely indissoluble; and *vice versa*. The ultimate question at issue between Mr. Mill and Mr. Spencer thus becomes reduced to a question of terminology, save in one important particular, in which I have already shown that Mr. Mill is not only demonstrably wrong, but also inconsistent with himself. The foregoing exposition adds new weight to the argument by which it was formerly (Part I., Chap. iii.) proved that when Mr. Mill asserts that the negation of such an axiom as the indestructibility of matter, which is now inconceivable, was in past times conceivable, he virtually asserts that there was a time when men could frame inner relations of which the corresponding outer relations had never been presented in experience. And thus he not only runs counter to the general theory of Life as Adjustment which is here adopted, but he contravenes his own favourite doctrine of the experiential origin of all knowledge, which is in reality part and parcel of that general theory of life.

With these corollaries I must conclude this too brief account of the process of psychical evolution. In the present chapter and its two predecessors, while steadily refraining from the chimerical attempt to identify Mind with some form of Matter or Motion, it has nevertheless been shown that, owing to the mysterious but unquestionable correlation which exists between the phenomena of Mind and the phenomena of Matter and Motion, it is possible to describe the evolution of the former by the same formula which describes the evolution of the latter. By a continuous differential compounding of impressions, we pass, through infinitesimal stages, from the relatively homogeneous and simple set of correspondences known as reflex action, mani-

fested alike by the highest and the lowest animals, to those exceedingly complex and heterogeneous sets of correspondences known as reason and volition, which are manifested only by the highest animals, and in their greatest complexity by man alone. Throughout this wonderful process we have seen how closely the evolution of psychical function is correlated with the evolution of nerve structure. But, great as has been our gain during the foregoing exposition, our theory of psychical evolution is as yet by no means complete. Concerning the relations of Mind to Life, and concerning the Composition and Evolution of Mind in general, we have obtained many valuable results. But nothing has as yet been said concerning the especial mode of genesis of those highest manifestations of thought and feeling which distinguish civilized man. This problem must be duly treated before our account of psychical evolution can be regarded as complete even in outline. Upon questions of this sort, however, we are not yet prepared to enter. Those highest manifestations of thought and feeling which distinguish civilized man from inferior mammals, and in a less-marked degree from uncivilized man, are the products of countless ages of social evolution; and before we can hope to understand their mode of genesis, we must see what are the teachings of history and psychology concerning the character of social evolution in general. Having shown how, starting from a relatively low degree of sociality, a relatively high degree is attained in conformity to the general theory of Life as Adjustment, we shall be better enabled to comprehend the genesis of that lowest degree of sociality, the attainment of which was the decisive step which first raised Man above the level of the Brutes. The four following chapters will therefore be concerned with Sociology; and the first will be devoted to clearing away a complicated misunderstanding, by the help of which metaphysicians have long sought, and still seek, to deter us from applying scientific methods of interpretation to the phenomena of human history.

CHAPTER XVII.

SOCIOLOGY AND FREE-WILL.

THAT the phenomena manifested by human beings, as grouped in societies, conform to fixed and ascertainable laws, is a proposition which has thus far been taken for granted, inasmuch as it is logically inseparable from the other sets of propositions which go to make up our Cosmic Philosophy. Not only, moreover, have we thus tacitly assumed that social phenomena conform to law and may be made the subject of science, but in the fourth chapter of this Synthesis it was expressly stated that the fundamental law to which they conform is the Law of Evolution, which has now been proved to hold sway among inorganic and organic phenomena, as well as among those super-organic phenomena which we distinguish as psychical. Under ordinary circumstances we might fairly go on and justify our tacit assumption and our explicit assertion, by showing, both deductively and inductively, that the evolution of society follows in general the same method as the evolution of organic life. In the following chapter I shall proceed to do this. I shall show, first, that social evolution consists in the integration of human families or tribal communities into larger and larger groups, which become ever more heterogeneous and more interdependent; and secondly, that what we call civilization consists in the ever increasing definiteness and complexity of the correspondence between the community

and the environment. Thirdly, I shall carry on the inquiry to a point somewhat in advance of Mr. Spencer's exposition, as it now stands, and show how these truths must be supplemented in order to give us a law of social evolution which shall cover social phenomena simply, excluding the more general phenomena of organic life.

But while under ordinary circumstances it might be well enough to proceed directly to such an investigation, since there is no better way of proving that certain groups of phenomena conform to law than by pointing out the law to which they conform, nevertheless in the present case I think it desirable to preface the inquiry with a brief discussion of one or two logical and psychological truths—truths of method and of doctrine—which lie at the basis of sociology. In our survey of the simpler sciences, no such preface was called for. In beginning to treat of biological truths, we did not deem it necessary to prove that waste and repair proceed according to immutable laws, or to forestall possible cavils by declaring that, although we cannot predict our states of health from week to week, nevertheless organic phenomena are not the sport of chance. It is otherwise in sociology, which is a new science, encumbered with many popular misconceptions, and regarded with an evil eye by theologians,—persons who profess great devotion to the interests of advancing knowledge in general, while the particular advance in knowledge at any time going on somehow never happens to be the one which they think fit to regard with favour. Of each new trophy which Science has from time to time laboriously won, these opponents have hastened to declare, "Behold it is the last!" Though the phenomena presented by the heavenly bodies, by the surface of the earth, and by the life which covers the earth, have one after another, in spite of vehement theological protest, been made the subjects of science,[1] it is still stoutly

[1] "Als Pythagoras seinen berühmten Lehrsatz entdeckte, opferte er den Göttern eine Hekatombe, d. h. ein Opfer von hundert Stieren. Seitdem

maintained that the results of human volitions can never become amenable to scientific treatment. Here, it is cried, on the threshold of sociology we must take our final stand, and insist, in the interests of religion and morality, that although all other events may occur in regular sequence, nevertheless in human affairs there is no such sequence. The arguments by which it is sought to establish this desperate proposition, are based partly on those facts which are assumed to prove the freedom of the will, partly on the endless diversity and complexity of human affairs. Concerning this latter class of considerations, I may say here that they are at once irrelevant and inconclusive. Irrelevant, since even if it were to be granted—which it is not—that the extreme intricacy of social phenomena may prevent our discerning the order of their sequence, this would prove, not that there is no sequence, but that our vision is limited. Inconclusive, because from the nature of the case, other things being equal, complex phenomena cannot be generalized until the simpler phenomena which they involve have been mentally reduced to orderly succession. As we shall again have occasion to notice, the laws of social life could not be discovered until the sciences of biology and psychology had gone far toward formulating the laws of physical and psychical life in general. But the misconceptions which cluster about this subject are so numerous that they may best be eliminated by a somewhat detailed controversy. Let us examine the argument from complexity, as presented by Mr. Froude; and afterwards the argument from the assumed lawlessness of volition, as presented by Mr. Goldwin Smith.

Mr. Froude begins [1] by dogmatically denying that there is or can be such a thing as a science of history. There is something incongruous, he says, in the very connection of

brüllen alle Ochsen, so oft eine neue Wahrheit entdeckt wird."—Büchner, *Die Darwin'sche Theorie*, p. 288.

[1] *Short Studies on Great Subjects*, vol. i.

the two words. "It is as if we were to talk of the colour of sound, or the longitude of the rule-of-three." But he carries on the thought in a way that shows plainly his reluctance to grapple fairly with the problem. In his next sentence he says, "where it is so difficult to make out the truth on the commonest disputed facts in matters passing under our very eyes, how can we talk of a science in things long past, which come to us only through books?" Now to reason like this, is merely to shrink from the encounter. For the question is, not whether the science is difficult, but whether it is possible. Mr. Froude sets out to show that there can be no such science, and his first bit of proof is that, if there is such a science, it must be far more difficult than any other; a position which we may contentedly grant. Let us follow him a step farther. "It often seems to me as if history were like a child's box of letters, with which we can spell any word we please. We have only to pick out such letters as we want, arrange them as we like, and say nothing about those which do not suit our purpose." And what does all this amount to? Is this Mr. Froude's idea of historical investigation? Why, the same thing may be done in any science. We have only to pick out all the facts on one side, and blink all the facts on the other side to prove the veracity of every oracle, soothsayer, and clairvoyant that ever existed, the validity of every paltry omen, the credibility of every crazy notion of alchemy or judicial astrology. In this way we may prove that the homœopathist always saves his patient, while the allopathist always kills him; or *vice versa*. And it was in this way that the phrenologists erected their pseudo-science. By following this method, also, it becomes easy to prove that Henry VIII. was an exemplary husband. It is in this way that every incorrect or inadequate hypothesis in physical science or in history has arisen and gained temporary recognition. Supposing Tycho Brahe had said to his Copernican antagonists, "Astronomy is like a child's box of letters;

if we take out what we want and let the rest go, we can spell whatever we please; I spell out the Ptolemaic hypothesis, and will therefore abide by it;"—he would have been talking much after the manner of Mr. Froude. It is true, as Mr. Froude further says, that one philosopher believes in progress, a second in retrogression, and a third, like Vico, in ever-recurring cycles. But is this because the facts are undecipherable, or because the investigation is one-sided? Because Agassiz still believes organic species to be fixed, while almost all other naturalists believe them to be variable in character, are we to infer that there is no science of biology? In such unworthy plight does Mr. Froude retreat before the problem he has encountered. He starts to show us that a science of history is as ridiculous an impossibility as a scarlet B-flat or a westerly proportion; and he ends by mildly observing that history is a difficult subject, in which a series of partial examinations may bring forth contradictory conclusions!

The next bit of inference concerns us more intimately. "Will a time ever be when the lost secret of the foundation of Rome can be recovered by historic laws? If not, where is our science?" Just where it was before. The science of history has nothing to do with dates, except to take them, so far as they can be determined, from the hands of historical criticism. They are its data, not its conclusions. As Mr. Morley reminds us, we do not dispute the possibility of a science of meteorology, because such a science cannot tell us whether it was a dry or a wet day at Jericho two thousand years ago. Facts like these show us that sciences dealing with phenomena which are the products of many and complex factors, cannot hope to attain that minute precision which is attained by sciences dealing with phenomena which are the products of few and simple factors. They show that sociology cannot, like astronomy, be brought under the control of mathematical deduction. But it was not necessary for Mr. Froude to write an essay to prove this.

But, continues Mr. Froude, "can you imagine a science which would have *foretold* such movements as" Mohammedanism, or Christianity, or Buddhism? To the question as thus presented, we must answer, certainly not. Neither can any man foretell any such movement as the typhoid fever which six months hence is to strike him down. If the latter case does not prove that there are no physiologic laws, neither does the former prove that there are no laws of history. In both instances, the antecedents of the phenomenon are irresistibly working out their results; though, in both cases, they are so complicated that no human skill can accurately anticipate their course. But to a different presentment of Mr. Froude's question, we might return a different answer. There is a sense in which movements like Mohammedanism, or Buddhism, or Christianity, could not have been predicted, and there is a sense in which they could have been. What could not have been predicted was the peculiar character impressed upon these movements by the gigantic personalities of such men as Mohammed and Omar, Sakyamuni, Jesus and Paul. What could have been predicted was the general character and direction of the movements. For example, as I shall show in the following chapter, Christianity as a universal religion was not possible until Rome had united in a single commonwealth the progressive nations of the world. And when Rome had accomplished this task, it might well have been predicted that before long a religion would arise, which should substitute monotheism for polytheism, proclaiming the universal fatherhood of God, and the universal brotherhood of men. I admit that such a prediction could have been made only by a person familiar with scientific modes of thought not then in existence; but could such a person have been present to contemplate the phenomena, he might have foreseen such a revolution in its main features, as being an inevitable result of the interaction of Jewish, Hellenic and Roman ideas. I am inclined to think he might

have foreseen that it would arise in Palestine, that its spread would be confined to the area covered by Roman civilization, and that its work would for a long time be most thorough in the most thoroughly Romanized regions.

We do not need, however, to insist upon this point. For in none of the concrete sciences is there anything like thorough and systematic prevision, save in astronomy; and even in astronomy, our foresight becomes precarious as soon as we pass beyond the solar system, and begin to inquire into the results of the mutual gravitation of the innumerable stellar bodies. We know that our sun is rushing, with immense velocity, toward the constellation Hercules; but we cannot yet trace his orbit, as Kepler traced the orbit of Mars. When we come to biology and psychology, the power of accurate prevision is very small; yet no one denies that the phenomena of life and intelligence conform to fixed and ascertainable laws. In sociology we must expect still less ability to predict. The truth is, as Comte acutely pointed out, that while in the simpler sciences our object is gained if we can foretell the course of phenomena so as to be able to regulate our actions by it, in the more complex sciences our object is gained when we have generalized the conditions under which phenomena occur so as to be able to make our volitions count for something in modifying them. We cannot modify astronomic phenomena, but we can predict them. We cannot predict, save to a limited extent, biologic phenomena; but, knowing more and more thoroughly the conditions under which they occur, we can more and more skilfully modify them so as to ensure health or overcome disease. And obviously even this limited ability to modify the phenomena implies a certain amount of prevision,—quite enough to justify us in asserting that the phenomena conform to law. The case is similar in sociology. Though we may not be able definitely to predict a given political revolution, we may nevertheless understand the general movement of affairs and

the effects which certain kinds of legislation are likely to produce, so as to hasten a desired result or avert social mischief. Upon this possibility are based all our methods of government and of education. And, as in biology, this ability to modify the phenomena proves that the phenomena occur in some fixed order of sequence. For if there were phenomena without any definite order of sequence, we could neither predict nor modify them; and where there is a definite order of sequence, there is, or may be, a science.

Now in denying that there is or can be a science of history, Mr. Froude, if he means anything, means that social affairs have no fixed order of sequence, but are the sport of chance. Either Law or Chance—these are the only alternatives, unless we were to have recourse, like the Mussulman, to Destiny, an illegitimate third idea, made up of the other two misconceived and mutilated in order to fit together. But for the modern thinker there is no middle course. It is either symmetry or confusion, law or chance, and between the two antagonist conceptions there can be no compromise. If the law of causation is universal, we must accept the theory of law. If it has ever, in any one instance, been violated, we may be excused for taking up with the theory of chance. Now we know that all the vast bodies in this sidereal universe move on for untold ages in their orbits, in strict conformity to law. In conformity to law, the solar system in all its complexity has grown out of a homogeneous nebula; and the crust of the cooling earth has condensed into a rigid surface fit for the maintenance of organic life. Out of plastic materials furnished by this surface and the air and moisture by which it is enveloped, organic life has arisen and been multiplied in countless differing forms, all in accordance with law. Of this aggregate of organic existence, man, the most complex and perfect type, lives and moves and has his being in strict conformity to law. His periods of activity and repose are limited by planetary rotations.

His achievements, physical and mental, are determined by the rate of his nutrition, and by the molecular structure and relative weight of the nervous matter contained in him. His very thoughts must chase each other along definite paths and contiguous channels marked out by the laws of association. Throughout these various phenomena, already generalized for us by astronomers, geologists, biologists, and psychologists, we know that neither at any time nor in any place is law interfered with,—that yesterday, to-day, and for ever, the effect follows the cause with inevitable and inexorable certainty. And yet we are asked to believe that in one particular corner of the universe, upon the surface of one little planet, in a portion of the organism of one particular creature, there is one special phenomenon, called volition, in which the law of causation ceases to operate, and everything goes helter-skelter!

Such is the demand which Mr. Froude makes upon our powers of acquiescence, and such is the theory which Mr. Goldwin Smith, in the interests of theology, pronounces it unphilosophical, if not impious, for us to reject. Of the Science of History, Mr. Smith asserts that "it extinguishes all sympathy"; it "must put an end to self-exertion"; it "would dissolve the human family"; it makes man the most helpless of animals, no better in fact than "a beast or a blade of grass"; it degrades humanity to mere clay; it establishes "a strange contradiction between our outward observation and our inward consciousness; it makes us "render up our personality," and become "a mere link in a chain of causation, a mere grain in a mass of being"; it builds up, "with much exultation," an "adamantine barrier of law"—whatever that may be—between man and the source of all goodness; and, to crown all, it tells us that "conscience is an illusion," and prevents our having any "rule of right action."[1]

[1] *Lectures on the Study of History*, pp. 63, 67, 48, 82, 85, 87, 59. Far ablor men than Mr. Smith or Mr. Froude have in like manner allowed their

Hard words are as powerless to overthrow as to establish a philosophical theory. In scientific inquiry the ability to weigh evidence goes for much, but facility in declamation goes for little. And to anyone who has been brought up amid scientific pursuits, there is but little that is instructive or edifying in the fervid rhetoric of a writer who, in attacking a disagreeable doctrine, prefers to stigmatize it as disagreeable, rather than to show that the evidence is against it. Nevertheless beneath the emotional assertions just quoted there lies a complicated theoretical misconception, the character of which it is worth our while to examine. The well-worn argument is that unless the human will were "free," there could be no responsibility, and therefore no morality; that if volitions are caused, even though it be by our own desires, we are all in a condition similar to that of the man who has made a promise under duress, to whom neither praise nor blame can justly be attached for the manner in which his promise is kept.

It is popularly supposed that there is something very forcible in this argument; and that, when coupled with the opposing arguments drawn from such sequences as are easily traceable among human affairs, the result is a puzzle which must for ever remain insoluble. The problem of free-will has been described by poets, and is customarily regarded, as the most difficult problem which can occupy human attention; and we frequently hear it said that it can never be

feelings to run away with them when treating of this question.—"Not the picture of a man; but the representation of an automaton that is what it cannot help being; a phantom dreaming what it cannot but dream; an engine performing what it must perform; an incarnate reverie; a weather-cock shifting helplessly in the winds of sensibility; a wretched association-machine, through which ideas pass linked together by laws over which the machine has no control; anything, in short, except that free and self-sustained centre of underived, and therefore responsible activity, which we call Man";—such, says Prof. Ferrier, is "the false representation of man which philosophy invariably and inevitably pictures forth whenever she makes common cause with the natural sciences."—*Lectures and Philosophical Remains*, vol. ii. p. 195. Verily the free-will question is a great opener of the flood-gates of rhetoric!

completely solved. But in reality all this perplexity is the result of the desperate muddle into which metaphysics has brought the subject. Strip the question of the peculiar metaphysical jargon in which it is usually propounded, restate it in precise scientific language, and it becomes a very easy question to answer. Would that science presented none more difficult! Confused and inaccurate verbiage is responsible for the chronic disputation upon this subject. Nowhere else is Berkeley's complaint so thoroughly applicable, that in dealing with metaphysics men first kick up a dust and then wonder why they cannot see through it. Those who have come to regard the question from a purely scientific point of view, also regard it as thoroughly settled; and the need for refuting such arguments as the one above cited, they class among the needs, too often thrust upon us, of refuting fallacies already thrice exploded. In illustration of this, let us notice the theory which the free-will argument implies concerning the nature of volition.

The theory implies that over and above particular acts of volition, there is a certain entity called "The Will," which is itself a sort of personage within the human personality. This entity, called "The Will," is supposed to have desires and intentions of its own, which the causationists are supposed to declare constantly liable to be frustrated by external agencies. In opposition to this imaginary heresy, it is asserted that this autocratic Will is "free," and sitting in judgment over "motives," may set aside the stronger in favour of a weaker, or may issue a decree in defiance of all motives alike. Some such crude conception as this is implicitly conveyed by every statement which, alluding to the Will as an entity, ascribes "freedom" to it. Only by means of such a conception can the phrase "freedom of the Will" be shielded from the imputation of nonsense. Only thus can the argument above cited be regarded as relevant to the subject in dispute. For if Will be not conceived as an

entity acting under conditions, then no comparison can be made between caused volition and constrained behaviour. If instead of "The Will" we look at the act of willing—which is not an entity, but a dynamic process—then it becomes absurd to talk of this act as being either free or not free, and we must seek for some other word than "freedom" by which to designate its alleged want of causal connection with preceding psychical states.

Now the tendency to erect relations and processes into entities is a tendency which modern metaphysics has inherited from a mischievous mode of thought current in ancient times and rather loosely known as "Realism." Among metaphysicians, unused to the habits of thought which science nurtures, the tendency is an almost irresistible one. Civilization, for example, is obviously a *process*, but Dr. Whately continually speaks of it as if it were a *thing* which could be handed about from one nation to another, or hidden away for a time in some dark corner. And upon this amusing misconception he builds a wonderful theory, which, however, it is not worth while for any busy man to stop and refute. It is in a similar way, and owing to the same realistic tendency, that there has arisen the conception of such an entity as "The Will," the existence of which modern psychology does not recognize any more than it recognizes the *lapidity* of stones or the *ubication* of points in space. Modern psychology is concerned only with the *process of will*, or volition. As Dr. Maudsley observes, "it is not man's function in life to think and feel only: his inner life he must express or utter in action of some kind —in word or deed. Receiving impressions from nature, of which he is a part, he reacts upon nature intelligently, modifying it in a variety of ways. . . . As the spinal cord reacts to its impressions in excito-motor action, and as the sensory centres react to their impressions in sensori-motor action, so, after the complex interworking and combination

of ideas in the hemispherical ganglia, there is in like manner a reaction or desire of determination of energy outwards, in accordance with the fundamental property of organic structure to seek what is beneficial and to shun what is hurtful to it. It is this property of tissue that gives the impulse which, when guided by intelligence, we call volition; and it is the abstraction from the particular volitions which metaphysicians personify as the Will. . . . Physiologically we cannot choose but reject the Will: volition we know, and will we know, but the Will, apart from particular acts of volition or will, we cannot know. To interpose such a metaphysical entity between reflection and action thereupon, would bring us logically to the necessity of interposing a similar entity between the stimulus to the spinal cord and its reaction. Thus instead of unravelling the complex by help of the more simple, we should obscure the simple by speculations concerning the complex." As scientific inquirers, "we have to deal with volition as a function of the supreme centres, following reflection, varying in quantity and quality as its cause varies, strengthened by education and exercise, enfeebled by disease, decaying with decay of structure, and always needing for its outward expression the educated agency of the subordinate motor centres. We have to deal with will, not as a single undecomposable faculty unaffected by bodily conditions, but as a result of organic changes in the supreme centres, affected as certainly and seriously by disorder of them as our motor faculties are by disorder of their centres. Loss of power of will is one of the earliest and most characteristic symptoms of mental derangement; and whatever may have been thought in times past, we know well now that the loss is not the work of some unclean spirit that has laid its hands upon the Will, but the direct effect of physical disease."

Volition is, accordingly, that transformation of feeling into

[1] *Body and Mind*, pp. 22, 23.

action which is attended by a conscious comparison of impressions, and which involves nutritive changes in the cerebrum or cerebellum, or in both. As we saw in the preceding chapter, the sequence of actions upon impressions is either reflex or instinctive, and in either case automatic, so long as the nervous energy liberated by the impression is instantly discharged through a completely permeable channel or set of channels. But in those higher organisms in which an immensely varied experience has established innumerable complex systems of less permeable channels, there intervenes between the liberation of energy in the brain and its discharge upon the motor centres a period during which there is a tension between various nerve-currents, each seeking to discharge itself along the most permeable lines of transit. We saw also that this period of tension is a period of conscious deliberation, involving conscious reflection, and feelings of desire or aversion. And these views turned out to be justified by the fact that as soon as the frequent repetition of any given set of experiences has rendered all the transit-lines involved in the case completely permeable, so that there is no longer any appreciable period of tension, then the acts once conscious and voluntary become involuntary and automatic.

Now the state of consciousness called Desire is accompanied by a nascent excitement of the nerve-fibres distributed upon the muscular apparatus whose activity is requisite for the attainment of the desired object. There is a tendency to go through with the movements needful for realizing the desire; and this tendency, unless neutralized by an antagonist tendency, must end in action. In the language of dynamics, tension when not counteracted by opposing tension, must pass into *vis viva*. This passage of nervous tension into nervous *vis viva* constitutes *volition*, which may

for practical purposes be regarded indifferently as the final stage of emotion or as the initial stage of action.

Passing from the case in which a single desire is operative let us briefly consider the special case of two conflicting desires, where the gratification of the one is incompatible with that of the other. In this case, two groups of motor-nerves are nascently-excited. Here there are two opposite tensions, and the resulting action will depend on their comparative strength. If they exactly neutralize each other, as in the hypothetical case of the ass between the two bundles of hay, no volition will ensue. But in a complex aggregate, like the human or animal organism, such a state of equilibrium cannot be of long continuance. Sooner or later,—either from the greater vividness with which one of the desired objects is mentally realized, or from any one of a thousand other disturbing circumstances down to those of a purely physical nature,—one desire will become stronger than the other. And instantly thereupon, the surplus nervous tension remaining after the weaker desire is neutralized, will pass into nervous *vis viva;* or, in other words, volition will take place.

The opposing tension need not, however, have desire for its concomitant. It may be furnished by the mere inertia of the nervo-muscular system; as when a man, wishing to do something which requires exertion, is too weary to do it. Weariness implies a diminution in the total amount of contractile force; a state in which a tension greater than ordinary is obviously required for the initiation of muscular motion. Conversely, the originating tension need not always be supplied by desire, but may be consequent upon vivacity, which is the presence of a superfluous amount of vital energy; as exemplified alike in the morning frolics of an infant, in the singing of birds, and in the gambols of a dog when released from his kennel.

Cases as simple as those here treated occur no doubt with comparative infrequency. Usually a great number of motives,

indefinitely complex and variable in their mutual combinations and oppositions, are simultaneously operative. But however numerous or complicated the forces at work, from whatever source the motives to action or inaction arise, whatever be the nature of the incentives to one kind of conduct or to some other kind, it is equally true that the result depends upon their comparative strength. Indeed, since forces can be measured only by their effects, to say that of two conflicting motives one is followed by volition, is to call that motive the stronger one. "Our only evidence of excess of force is the movement it produces"; and when the ancient engineer wished to ascertain the comparative power of a couple of catapults, he had no alternative but to see which would hurl its stone to the greater distance. To say explicitly that volition does not follow the strongest motive, is to say implicitly that motion does not always follow the line of least resistance; which is to deny the persistence of force.

Volition being accordingly regarded as the process whereby feeling initiates action, it becomes evident that the term "free" is no more applicable to it than the term "copper-coloured." As Mr. Bain observes; "The designation 'liberty of choice' has no real meaning, except as denying extraneous interference. If I am interfered with by another person compelling me to act in one way, then it may be said, intelligibly enough, that I have not liberty of choice. But, as between the different motives of my own mind, there is no meaning in the use of the word 'liberty.' Various motives,—present or prospective pleasures and pains,—concur in urging me to act. The result of the conflict shows that one group is stronger than another, and that is the whole case."[1] Or, as M. Littré has still more forcibly reminded us, the term "liberty," as applied to volition, *means* the power of obeying the strongest motive. When that power is interfered with,

[1] Bain, *The Emotions and the Will*, 1st edit. p. 550.

by paralysis or insanity, or the constraint exercised by other persons, then we may truly say that we are deprived of free-will and of responsibility. But so long as circumstances allow volition to follow the strongest motive, then we truly say that we are free and responsible for our actions. Thus the tables are completely turned, and much of the current disputation on this subject is reduced at once to unmeaning verbiage. The popular arguments in favour of "freedom" are seen to be as palpable cases of *ignoratio elenchi* as are those daily urged against the development hypothesis. By a scientific definition of Will, the assertion of freedom is set aside as irrelevant, leaving behind the assertion of non-causation. That this too is virtually disposed of by the same definition, scarcely needs pointing out. Yet, for the sake of still greater clearness, our present results may fitly be supplemented by a new class of considerations.

That volitions differ from all other phenomena by their capability of occurring without any cause, is the opinion of the free-will philosophers; and Mr. Smith, in criticizing the contrary opinion, remarks that "if comets formed their own future" (*i.e.*, were endowed with volition), "they would be rather embarrassing subjects of science." Without attempting to decipher the vagaries in which these cosmical bodies might in such case take it upon themselves to indulge,[1] it will be enough for my present purpose to point out some of the shoals on which the free-will doctrine must land its defenders. If volitions arise without cause, it necessarily follows that we cannot infer from them the character of the antecedent states of feeling. If, therefore, a murder has been committed, we have *d priori* no better reason for suspecting

[1] In point of fact a comet does "form its own future" in the same way that a man does. The state of a heavenly body at any given moment is a product, partly of the forces, molar and molecular, with which it was endowed at the preceding moment, and partly of the forces simultaneously exerted upon it by environing heavenly bodies. The case of human volition differs from this in nothing save the number and complexity, and consequent relative incalculableness, of the forces at work.

the worst enemy than the best friend of the murdered man. If we see a man jump from a fourth-story window, we must beware of too hastily inferring his insanity, since he may be merely exercising his free-will; the intense love of life implanted in the human breast being, as it seems, unconnected with attempts at suicide or at self-preservation. We can thus frame no theory of human actions whatever. The countless empirical maxims of every-day life, the embodiment as they are of the inherited and organized sagacity of many generations, become wholly incompetent to guide us; and nothing which any one may do, ought ever to occasion surprise. The mother may strangle her first-born child, the miser may cast his long-treasured gold into the sea, the sculptor may break in pieces his lately-finished statue, in the presence of no other feelings than those which before led them to cherish, to hoard, and to create.

To state these conclusions is to refute their premise. Probably no defender of the doctrine of free-will could be induced to accept them, even to save the theorem with which they are inseparably wrapped-up. Yet the dilemma cannot be avoided. Volitions are either caused, or they are not. If they are not caused, an inexorable logic brings us to the absurdities just mentioned. If they are caused, the free-will doctrine is annihilated. No help is afforded by the gratuitous hypothesis that there is a connection between the act and the motive, which yet is not a causal connection. Such connection, if it exist, must be a case either of conditional invariable sequence, or of unconditional invariable sequence. On the first supposition, we have a case like the succession of day and night, in which both terms of the sequence are conditioned upon a third fact; so that here we do not escape causation. The second supposition is but an assertion of causation in other words. While to take refuge in the postulate that this assumed connection is a case of variable sequence, is to affirm and deny connection in the same breath.

But it is said that consciousness declares the Will to be free; and therefore that any attempt to disprove its freedom by reasoning is suicidal, since all such reasoning must end by impugning the veracity of that consciousness on which its own data are ultimately based. An ingenious argument truly, the conclusion whereof would be more readily admitted, if its premise were true. Consciousness, which is so confidently appealed to as establishing by its infallible verdict the doctrine of free-will, in fact says nothing about the matter. That volitions are uncaused, is a proposition altogether too indirect for consciousness to sit in judgment upon, and it can neither be proved nor disproved by simple introspection. It would have been equally appropriate for the mediæval astronomer to appeal to consciousness as testifying to the revolution of the sun about the earth. As Mr. Bain observes, "it is a great stretch of asseveration to call the construction of an enormous theory an act of consciousness so simple that we cannot make a slip in performing it."[1] Consciousness tells us only that we will. By observation and experience—not by the simple and direct interrogation of consciousness—we know that, circumstances permitting, our volitions may be accomplished. With the exception, therefore, of those theological fatalists who assert that human actions are determined by an external constraining power, it is the universal opinion that men can voluntarily determine their own actions; and this is just what the much-abused testimony of consciousness amounts to. This is all that it means to anyone not mystified by metaphysics; the non-causation of volitions being a theorem so far from obvious to a great many men, that it requires considerable explanation to make them understand it. By the testimony of consciousness, as thus interpreted, the assertors of the lawlessness of volition are not helped in the least. The question at issue between them and their opponents is, not

[1] *The Emotions and the Will*, 1st edit. p. 563.

whether the actions of men are normally free, but whether their freedom is consistent with their being caused. The assertors of "Free-Will" maintain that causation is inconsistent with liberty.[1] The so-called necessarians assert that liberty and causation are quite consistent with each other. To which we must now add, that it is not causation, but the absence thereof, which is as incompatible with liberty as it is with law.

For the causationist, believing that volition invariably follows the stronger motive, endeavours to increase the relative strength of all those emotions whose outcome is virtuous and upright conduct, while he strives to weaken those feelings whose tendency is toward base and ignoble conduct. Knowing that by continual indulgence desire is reinforced, while by constant repression it is enfeebled, he applies this knowledge to the control of his will and the discipline of his character. But on the theory that volitions are causeless, all methods of self-discipline become of no avail. If they are powerless to influence action, it is of small practical importance whether noble and sympathetic or base and selfish motives are prevalent; and the moral distinction between them loses most of its significance. Why, asks Mr. Smith, "is a Philip II. more the subject of moral disapprobation than the plague?" Why, indeed, unless his atrocious crimes are to be interpreted as the necessary outgrowth of a character wherein good motives were impotent and bad motives all-powerful. Were volition self-determining, then similar acts

[1] "The law of bondage throughout the universe is the law of cause and effect. In the violation, then, of this law, true freedom must consist." Ferrier, *Lectures and Philosophical Remains*, vol. ii. p. 255. One might expect such a remark as this from Mr. Goldwin Smith, who speaks of being "bound by the chain of certain causation"; but from so acute a thinker as Prof. Ferrier, it is surprising. To adopt, in a somewhat altered sense, Kant's happy illustration,—the spectacle of a bird denouncing as an encumbrance the air by which alone it is enabled to fly, would be a fitting parallel to the spectacle of those philosophers who decry that regularity of sequence through which alone has "freedom" any meaning. As Lessing long ago said, with well-bestowed contempt, "Le beau privilège d'être soumis à une puissance aveugle qui ne suit aucune règle! *En serait-je moins le jouet du hasard parce que ce hasard résiderait en moi?*"

might have been committed by a Washington or a Borromeo. Obviously there would be little use in laboriously schooling our desires to virtue, if at any moment in spite thereof, some uncaused volition might bring forth from us a detestable deed. It is therefore not the doctrine of causation, but the so-called free-will doctrine, that, if true, would "put an end to self-exertion," and deprive us of every "rule of right action." Since self-control, and therefore liberty, is impossible unless volition is determined by desire; it is the latter doctrine—not the former—which is really inconsistent with the assertion of human freedom, which takes from us the dignity of responsibility, and makes man the sport of a grotesque and purposeless chance.

In truth, the immediate corollaries of the free-will doctrine are so shocking not only to philosophy but to common-sense, that were not accurate thinking a somewhat rare phenomenon, it would be inexplicable how any credit should ever have been given to such a dogma. This is but one of the many instances, in which by the force of words alone, men have been held subject to chronic delusion. The libertarian doctrine has obtained currency because it has talked loudly of human freedom, with which nevertheless a brief analysis proves it to be incompatible. Substitute for the unmeaning phrase "freedom of the Will," the accurate phrase "lawlessness of volition," and the theory already looks less plausible. In place of the vague and ambiguous word "necessity," write the clear and definitely-connotative word "causation," and the scientific theory at once loses its imaginary terrors. The titles with which the free-will doctrine decorates itself, and those with which it brands its opponent, are alike "question-begging epithets." They serve to prejudge the point at issue.

Not content with the overwhelming prestige which its name thus gives it, the free-will doctrine seeks to follow up its advantage by identifying its antagonist with Asiatic

fatalism; a confusion of ideas like that under which Mr. Bounderby laboured, when unable to see the difference between giving workmen their just dues, and feeding them with turtle-soup out of a gold-lined spoon. To say that actions dependent on volition will take place whenever the essential conditions are present, and to say that they will take place even if the conditions are absent, are by free-will theorists held to be one and the same assertion![1] Fatalism is, however, much more closely akin to their own doctrine. Each ignores causation; each is incompatible with personal freedom; the only difference between them being that the one sets up Chance, while the other sets up Destiny, as the arbiter of human affairs. And while each doctrine is theoretically held by large bodies of men, each in practice is habitually contradicted by its upholders. The defenders of free-will, who in practice are obliged to admit a certain connection between acts and motives, and the Arab fatalists, among whom the saying is current that "when Allah wills an event, he prepares the causes beforehand," alike exemplify this. Though both agree in repudiating causation, both equally in their every-day maxims give evidence of an unconscious belief in its existence.

Having identified the causation theory with fatalism, it becomes all the easier for its opponents to accuse it of denying moral responsibility. Accordingly, when Mr. Buckle, following in the footsteps of Laplace, inferred from the regularity of the statistics of crime and suicide, marriages and dead-letters, that voluntary actions conform to law;[2] it was

[1] "It is owing to the very general misconception of the nature of Law that there arises the misconception of Necessity; the fact that events arrive irresistibly whenever their conditions are present, is confounded with the conception that the events must arrive whether the conditions be present or not, being fatally predetermined. Necessity simply says that whatever is is, and will vary with varying conditions. Fatalism says that something *must be*; and this something cannot be modified by any modification of the conditions." —Lewes, *Problems of Life and Mind*, vol. i. p. 309.

[2] Buckle, *Civilization in England*, vol. i. pp. 20—30; Laplace, *Essai sur les Probabilités*, p. 76.

proposed by one of his reviewers that state-governments should at once suspend judicial operations, and having ascertained from statistics the yearly number of murders, should forthwith hang a corresponding number of individuals, selected by lot from the community. To which suggestion the natural reply would have been, that if governments ever do adopt this singular course of administering justice, they will then be consistently acting on the belief that motives do not stand in a causal relation to volitions. If the volition can follow the weaker motive, the feelings which ordinarily deter from the commission of crime, need not be strengthened by the fear of punishment.[1]

Thus do all the favourite arguments in behalf of the free-will hypothesis recoil upon its defenders. To adopt from barbarian warfare, an ungraceful but expressive simile, they are like awkwardly-thrown boomerangs which wound the thrower. Attempting, as the free-will philosophers do, to destroy the science of history, they are compelled by an inexorable logic to pull down with it the cardinal principles of ethics, politics, and jurisprudence. Political economy, if rigidly dealt with on their theory, would fare little better; and psychology would become chaotic jargon. That psychical actions, and volitions among them, conform to law, is the indispensable axiom of every science or philosophy which treats of the mind and its products, whether indi-

[1] "The very reason for giving notice that we intend to punish certain acts, and for inflicting punishment if the acts be committed, is that we trust in the efficacy of the threat and the punishment as deterring motives. If the volition of agents be not influenced by motives, the whole machinery of law becomes unavailing, and punishment a purposeless infliction of pain. In fact it is on that very ground that the madman is exempted from punishment; his volition being presumed to be not capable of being acted upon by the deterring motive of legal sanction. The *free* agent, thus understood, is one who can neither feel himself accountable, nor be rendered accountable to or by others. It is only the *necessary* agent (the person whose volitions are determined by motives, and, in case of conflict, by the strongest desire or the strongest apprehension) that can be held really accountable, or can feel himself to be so."—Grote, *Review of Mill's Examination of Hamilton's Philosophy*, p. 97.

vidually or socially embodied. He who asserts the contrary, maintains "a form of the Manichæan doctrine of two principles . . . . in which one principle, that of order, presides over the physical phenomena of the universe, and the other, that of disorder, over its moral phenomena."[1] As I have already said, no middle ground can be taken. The denial of causation is the affirmation of chance, and "between the theory of Chance and the theory of Law, there can be no compromise, no reciprocity, no borrowing and lending." To write history on any method furnished by the free-will doctrine, would be utterly impossible. Mr. Smith tells us that "finding at Rome a law to encourage tyrannicide, we are certain that there had been tyrants at Rome, though there is nothing approaching to historical evidence of the tyranny of Tarquin." By drawing this inference he abandons his own principles, according to which the law in question might have originated without any cause except the self-determining will of some Roman legislator. And he is equally inconsistent in saying that "a nation may *have* to go through one stage of knowledge or civilization before it can reach another, but its going through either is still *free*." If by this it is meant that a nation's progress need not be due to constraint exercised over it by other nations, the statement is true, but it is one which no one has thought of disputing. But if it is meant that the latter of two successive stages of civilization is not caused by the former, the statement destroys itself. By admitting that "a nation may *have* to go through one stage of civilization before it can reach another," Mr. Smith gives up his case and concedes all which has ever been claimed by those who would construct a science of history. If there is a definite order of sequence among the stages of civilization, that order may sooner or later be formulated, and to formulate that order is to found sociology as a science. But if causation in history is denied,

[1] W. Adam, *Theories of History*, p. 65.

if each epoch is not determined by the preceding epoch, then the inference is inevitable that the French Revolution might have happened in the reign of Louis XI., or that the progress of Christianity might have been eastward instead of westward. Thus all conception of progress, as well as all conception of order, is at an end. Thus the vast domain of History, numbering among its component divisions the phenomena of Language, Art, Religion, and Government, the products of social activity as well as the phases of social progress, becomes an unruly chaos, a Tohu-va-Bohu, where event stumbles after event, and change jostles change, without sequence and without law.

I think, therefore, we are quite justified in saying that, when stripped of the metaphysical jargon in which it is usually propounded, the question of free-will becomes an easy one to answer. Having laid the dust which metaphysicians have kicked up, we find our vision no longer obscured. From whatever scientific stand-point we contemplate the doctrine of the lawlessness of volition, we find that its plausibleness depends solely on tricks of language. The first trick is the personification of Will as an entity distinct from all acts of volition; the second trick is the ascription to this entity of "freedom," a word which is meaningless as applied to the process whereby feeling initiates action; and the third trick is the assumption that desires or motives are entities outside of a person, so that if his acts of volition were influenced by them he would be robbed of his freedom. Anyone, however, who is not misled by these verbal quibbles, and who bears in mind that a person, psychologically considered, is nothing more than the sum of his conscious states, will perceive at once that when the desires or aversions determine the volitional acts, it is the person himself who determines them. We have accordingly seen that, since liberty of choice means nothing if it does not mean the power to exert volition in the direction indicated by the strongest group of motives;

and since all control over character is impossible unless desires and volitions occur in a determinate order of sequence; it is the doctrine of lawlessness and not the causationist doctrine which is incompatible with liberty and destructive of responsibility. The rhetoric which Mr. Goldwin Smith lavishes, on the strength of a set of misapplied phrases, might therefore be justly retorted upon him, on the strength of a psychologic analysis. And this, which is the conclusion of science, we have seen to be also the conclusion of common-sense. Whatever may be our official theories, we all practically ignore and discredit the doctrine that volition is lawless. Whatever voice of tradition we may be in the habit of echoing, we do equally, from the earliest to the latest day of our self-conscious existence, act and calculate upon the supposition that volition, alike in ourselves and in others, follows invariably the strongest motive. And upon this ineradicable belief are based all our methods of government, of education, and of self-discipline. Finally, in turning our attention to history, we have found that the aggregate of thoughts, desires, and volitions in any epoch is so manifestly dependent upon the aggregate of thoughts, desires, and volitions in the preceding epoch, that even the assertors of the lawlessness of volition are forced to commit logical suicide by recognizing the sequence. Thus, whether we contemplate volitions themselves, or compare their effects, whether we resort to the testimony of psychology or to the testimony of history, we are equally compelled to admit that Law is coextensive with all orders of phenomena and with every species of change.

It is hardly creditable to the character of the present age for scientific enlightenment that such a statement should need to be made, or that twenty-six pages of critical argument should be required to illustrate it. To many this chapter will no doubt seem much like an elaborate attempt to prove the truth of the multiplication table. Nevertheless where such

a blinding metaphysical dust has been raised, a few drops of the cold water of common-sense may be not only harmless but useful. Having thus done somewhat to clear the air, we may next proceed to point out the way in which social changes conform to the Law of Evolution.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE EVOLUTION OF SOCIETY.

ANY attempt to discover the laws to which social changes conform must run great risk of being frustrated by the mere immensity of the mass of details which the investigator strives to arrange in orderly sequence. Seemingly numberless as are the phenomena dealt with by the physical sciences, they bear no proportion, either in multitude or in variety, to the facts upon which the student of sociology must build his scientific theorems. Facts concerning man in his physical relations to soil, climate, food, and the configuration of the earth, blend with facts concerning the intellectual and moral relations of men to each other and to the aspects of nature by which they are surrounded, making up a problem of such manifold complexity that it may well have long been deemed incapable of satisfactory solution. The fit ground for wonder is, indeed, not that we are as yet unable to arrive at accurate prevision amid such a diversified throng of phenomena, but that, considering the meagreness of our knowledge in many other departments, we should have been able to detect any uniformity whatever in human affairs, and having detected it, to explain it upon trustworthy scientific principles.

There is but one way to conduct such an intricate investigation securely to its final issue; and that is, to make extensive

use of elimination as it is employed in the simpler sciences. "If without any previous investigation of the properties of terrestrial matter, Newton had proceeded at once to study the dynamics of the universe, and after years spent with the telescope in ascertaining the distances, sizes, times of revolution, inclinations of axes, forms of orbits, perturbations, etc., of the celestial bodies, had set himself to tabulate this accumulated mass of observations, and to educe from them the fundamental laws of planetary and stellar equilibrium, he might have cogitated to all eternity without arriving at a result." This lucid illustration, which I have cited from the introduction to Mr. Spencer's "Social Statics," suggests the proper method of approaching the investigation of complex phenomena. Minor perturbing elements must for a time be left out of consideration, just as the inequalities of motion resulting from the mutual attractions of the planets were at first passed over in the search for the general formula of gravitation. The discussion of endless minute historical details must be reserved until the law of social changes has been deduced from the more constant phenomena, and is ready for inductive verification. A law wide enough to form a basis for sociology must needs be eminently abstract, and can be found only by contemplating the most general and prominent characteristics of social changes. The prime requisite of the formula of which we are in quest is that it should accurately designate such changes under their leading aspect.

Now by far the most obvious and constant characteristic common to a vast number of social changes is that they are changes from a worse to a better state of things,—that they constitute phases of Progress. It is not asserted that human history has in all times and places been the history of progress; it is not denied that at various times and in many places it has been the history of retrogression; but attention is called to the fact—made trite by long familiarity, yet none

the less habitually misconceived—that progress has been on the whole the most constant and prominent feature of the history of a considerable and important portion of mankind.

Around this cardinal fact have clustered, as I just hinted, many serious misconceptions. The illustrious thinkers of the last century, who endeavoured to study human history from a scientific point of view, were unconsciously led into an error from which contemporary writers have not as yet entirely freed themselves. The followers of Turgot and Condorcet were prone to regard progress as something necessary and universal. They attempted to account for it, much as Lamarck tried to explain organic development, as the continuous and ubiquitous manifestation of an occult, inherent tendency toward perfection. Subsequent literature exhibits many traces of this metaphysical conception. Thus Dr. Whately, in his edition of Archbishop King's discourses, asserts that "civilization is the natural state of man, since he has evidently a natural tendency toward it." Upon which it has been aptly remarked that, "by a parity of reasoning, old age is the natural state of man, since he has evidently a natural tendency towards it." Indeed, as this comparison is intended to show, it is difficult to use such expressions as "natural state" and "natural tendency" without becoming involved in a confusion of ideas. And to ascribe progress to an inherent tendency, without taking into account the complex set of conditions amid which alone that tendency can be realized, is to give us an empty formula instead of a scientific explanation. Whether the individual will die young or reach old age, and whether the community will remain barbarous or become civilized, depends, to a great extent, upon environing circumstances; and no theory of progress can have any value which omits the consideration of this fact. Mr. William Adam labours under the confusion of ideas here signalized, when he finds fault with Sir G. C. Lewis for upholding the doctrine of progress while admitting

that certain races have never advanced in civilization. For this, Mr. Adam accuses him of virtually dividing mankind into two differently-constituted races, of which the one possesses, while the other lacks, the inherent tendency toward perfection![1] He might as well maintain that because we admit that certain men are stunted, while others grow tall, we divide mankind into two differently-constituted races, of which the one possesses while the other lacks, the inherent tendency toward increase in size. Closely allied to this fallacy is that which associates lateness in time with completeness in development, and requires us to assume that nowhere at any time has there been a temporary retrogression. Thus Mr. Goldwin Smith appears to be confused by the impression that the temporary decline in the moral tone of English society after the Restoration of Charles II., is a fact inconsistent with the doctrine of a general progress. And Mr. Mansel still more preposterously declares that on the theory of progression we ought to regard the polytheism of imperial Rome as a higher form of religion than the earlier Hebrew worship of Jehovah. While another form of the same confusion is to be seen in the attempts which writers imbued with the conception of progress often make, to coax the annals of the past into affirming the uninterrupted advance of civilization.

These examples show how vaguely the doctrine of progress has hitherto been apprehended. The fallacy of supposing civilization to have proceeded serially, or uniformly, or in consequence of any universal tendency, is nearly akin to the fallacy of classifying the animal kingdom in a series of ascending groups,—a fruitful source of delusion, which it was Cuvier's great merit to have steadily avoided. The theological habit of viewing progressiveness as a divine gift to man,[2] and the

[1] W. Adam, *Theories of History*, p. 87.

[2] "It is impossible for mere savages to civilize themselves. . . . Consequently men must at some period have received the rudiments of civilization

metaphysical habit of regarding it as a necessary attribute of humanity, are equally unsound and equally fraught with error. Until more accurate conceptions are acquired, no secure advance can be made toward discerning the true order of social changes. Far from being necessary and universal, progress has been in an eminent degree contingent and partial. Its career has been frequently interrupted by periods of stagnation or declension, and wherever it has gone on, it has been forwarded, not by an inexplicable tendency or *nisus*, but by a concurrence of favourable conditions, external and internal. We must remember moreover, as Sir Henry Maine reminds us,[1] that the communities which have attained to a conspicuous degree of civilization constitute a numerical minority of mankind. Contemporaneous with the rapidly advancing nations of Europe exist the sluggish nations of Asia, and the almost stationary tribes of Africa and Polynesia.

"Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay."

So irregular, indeed, has been the march of civilization, that most stages of progress may be made the subject of ocular investigation at the present day.

In the science of history, therefore, old "means not old in chronology, but in structure: that is most archaic which lies nearest to the beginning of human progress considered as a development, and that is most modern which is farthest removed from that beginning."[2]

Nevertheless, in spite of the fact that the career of progress has been neither universal nor unbroken, it remains entirely true that the law of progress, when discovered, will be found to be the law of history. The great fact to be explained is

from a superhuman instructor." (!) Whately's *Rhetoric*, p. 94. A statement not altogether compatible with the one just quoted from the same author in the text.

[1] *Ancient Law*, p. 24; cf. Lewis, *Methods of Observation in Politics*, vol. i. p. 302.

[2] M'Lennan, *Primitive Marriage*, p. 9.

either the presence or the absence of progress. And when we have formulated the character of progress, and the conditions essential to it, we have the key to the history of the stationary as well as of the progressive nations. When we are able to show why the latter have advanced, the same general principle will enable us to show why the former have not advanced. Though in biogeny we habitually view the process of natural selection as the process whereby higher organisms are slowly originated, the principle loses none of its importance because sundry species from time to time suffer deterioration, or remain stationary, or become extinct. When we know how it is that some species advance, we know how it is that other species do not advance. So, in the science of language, which is equally with sociogeny a science of development—being, indeed, neither more nor less than a quite special province of sociogeny—we rightly consider the main problem solved when we have explained the process of phonetic integration, by which languages ascend from the primary, through the secondary, to the tertiary stage of structure. It matters not that Chinese remains to this day a primary language, and that the numerical majority of languages have not yet become tertiary by completely fusing together the component roots of their words. The process by which languages pass from a lower stage to a higher remains none the less the fundamental phenomenon to be investigated, and when we have generalized the conditions under which this process takes place, we can explain its absence as well as its presence. Now the case is the same with progress in society, that it is with progress in language or in organic life. Whether manifested or not manifested in any particular community, progress is still the all-important phenomenon to be investigated. It is the one grand phenomenon, to explain the presence and the absence of which, is to explain the phenomena of history. Just as the study of the languages which have advanced furnishes us the key for understanding those which have

not advanced, so the study of the progressive communities furnishes us, as we shall see, the law of history; a law which, in its most general expression, covers the phenomena presented by the non-progressive communities likewise. Comte was therefore right in restricting the main current of his inquiry to the course of that civilization which began on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, and has extended over Europe and a portion of America. The same plan will be pursued in the present chapter. Although incidental confirmation will be sought in the history of the stationary communities, our main problem will be to formulate the law of progress from a comparison of the phenomena presented by the progressive communities.

But before we can fairly enter upon our task, it will be desirable for us to note the Factors of Progress with which we shall chiefly have to deal.

The prime factors in social progress are the Community and its Environment. The environment of a community comprises all the circumstances, adjacent or remote, to which the community may be in any way obliged to conform its actions. It comprises not only the climate of the country, its soil, its flora and fauna, its perpendicular elevation, its relation to mountain-chains, the length of its coast-line, the character of its scenery, and its geographical position with reference to other countries; but it includes also the ideas, feelings, customs, and observances of past times, so far as they are preserved by literature, traditions, or monuments; as well as foreign contemporary manners and opinions, so far as they are known and regarded by the community in question. Thus defined, the environment may be very limited or very extensive. The environment of an Eskimo tribe consists of the physical circumstances of Labrador, of adjoining tribes, of a few traders or travellers, and of the sum-total of the traditions received from ancestral Eskimos. These make up the sum of the conditions affecting the social existence of

the Eskimos. The environment of the United States, on the other hand, while it comprises the physical conditions of the North American continent, comprises also all contemporary nations with whom we have intercourse, and all the organized tradition—political and ethical, scientific and religious—which we possess in common with all the other communities whose civilization originated in the Roman Empire. The significance of this increase of size and diversity in the environment will be explained presently.

Bearing in mind this definition of a social environment—which I believe carries with it its own justification—let us briefly notice the error committed by those writers who would fain interpret all the most important social phenomena as due, solely or chiefly, to physical causes. This is an error frequently committed by physiologists who try their hand at the investigation of social affairs, and who attempt to treat sociology as if it were a mere branch of biology. But this is not the case. As we have seen psychology to be an offshoot from biology, specialized by the introduction of inquiries concerning the relations of the percipient mind to its environment; we must similarly regard sociology as an offshoot from psychology, specialized by the introduction of inquiries concerning the relations of many percipient and emotionally-incited minds to each other and to their common environment. As in biogeny all attempts to discover the law of organic development failed utterly so long as the relations of the organism to physical environing agencies were alone studied, and succeeded only when Mr. Darwin took into account the relations of organisms to each other; so still more inevitably in sociogeny must all our efforts fail so long as we consider merely the physiologic relations of a community to the country in which it dwells, and refuse to recognize the extent to which communities influence each other by means that are purely intellectual or moral. Doubtless the character of the physical environment is of importance, more

especially, perhaps, in the earlier stages of civilization. No doubt civilization will first arise, other things equal, in a locality where food and shelter can be obtained with a medium amount of exertion; where nature is neither too niggard nor too lavish in the bestowal of her favours. No doubt there is a physical significance in the fact that civilization began, not in barren Siberia, or in luxuriant Brazil, but in countries like Egypt and Mesopotamia, which were neither so barren as to starve, nor so luxuriant as to spoil, the labourer. No doubt the Greeks owed much to the extent of their coast-line. No doubt—above all—the Mediterranean is justly sacred to the student of history as partly the civilizer of the peoples who upon its waves first courted adventure, and conducted commerce, and imparted to each other cosmopolitan sympathies which could never have been evoked but for some such intercourse. All this may be granted. But as civilization advances, the organized experience of past generations becomes to a greater and greater extent the all-important factor of progress. As Comte expresses it, in one of his profoundest aphorisms, the empire of the dead over the living increases from age to age. If we contemplate, from a lofty historical point of view, the relative importance of the factors in the environment of our United States, I believe we shall be forced to conclude that the victory of the Greeks at Marathon, the conquest of Gaul by Cæsar, the founding of Christianity, the defeat of Attila at Châlons and of the Arabs at Tours, the advent of the Normans in England, the ecclesiastic reforms of Hildebrand, the Crusades, the revolt of Luther, the overthrow of the Spanish Armada, and the achievements of scientific inquirers from Archimedes to Faraday, have influenced and are influencing our social condition to a far greater extent than the direction of the Rocky Mountains, or the position of the Great Lakes or the course of the Gulf Stream. Or if we inquire why the Spaniards are still so superstitious and bigoted, I believe we shall find

little enlightenment in the fact that Spain is peculiarly subject to earthquakes, but much enlightenment in the fact that for eight centuries Spain was the arena of a life-and-death struggle between orthodox Christians and Moorish unbelievers.

The mention of Spain and earthquakes brings me to Mr. Buckle, a writer of marked ability, who, though he did not explicitly countenance the error I am here criticizing, was nevertheless sometimes betrayed into committing it, as may be seen from the following passage:—"The Arabs in their own country have, owing to the extreme aridity of their soil, always been a rude and uncultivated people; for in their case, as in all others, great ignorance is the fruit of great poverty. But in the seventh century they conquered Persia; in the eighth century they conquered the best part of Spain; in the ninth century they conquered the Punjab, and eventually nearly the whole of India. Scarcely were they established in their fresh settlements, when their character seemed to undergo a great change. They who in their original land were little else than roving savages, were now for the first time able to accumulate wealth, and, therefore, for the first time did they make some progress in the arts of civilization. In Arabia they had been a mere race of wandering shepherds; in their new abodes they became the founders of mighty empires, — they built cities, endowed schools, collected libraries; and the traces of their power are still to be seen at Cordova, at Bagdad, and at Delhi."[1] To exhibit the utter superficiality of this explanation, we have only to ask two questions. First, if the Arabs became civilized *only* because they exchanged their native deserts for Spain, Persia and India, why did not the same hold true of the Turks, when they exchanged their barren steppes for the rich empire of Constantinople? Though they have held for four centuries what is perhaps the finest geographical position on the

[1] *History of Civilization*, vol. i. p. 42.

earth's surface, the Turks have never directly aided the progress of civilization. Secondly, how was it that the Arabs ever came to leave their native deserts and to conquer the region between the Pyrenees and the Ganges? Was it because of a geologic convulsion? Was it because the soil, the climate, the food, or the general aspect of nature, had undergone any sudden change? One need not be a profound student of history to see the absurdity of such a suggestion. It was because their minds had been greatly wrought upon by new ideas; because their conceptions of life, its duties, its aims, its possibilities, had been revolutionized by the genius of Mohammed. The whole phenomenon requires a psychological, not a physical, explanation.

The environment in our problem must, therefore, not only include psychical as well as physical factors, but the former are immeasurably the more important factors, and as civilization advances their relative importance steadily increases. Bearing in mind these preliminary explanations, let us now address ourselves to the problem of social evolution, applying to the solution of it sundry biological principles established in previous chapters. We have first to observe that it is a corollary from the law of use and disuse, and the kindred biologic laws which sum up the processes of direct and indirect equilibration, that the fundamental characteristic of social progress is *the continuous weakening of selfishness and the continuous strengthening of sympathy.* Or—to use a more convenient and somewhat more accurate expression suggested by Comte—it is a gradual supplanting of *egoism* by *altruism.*

In the course of our inquiry into the causes of organic evolution, it was shown that all the processes cooperating in the development of higher from lower forms of life, are in the widest and deepest sense processes of equilibration.[1] The all-important truth was there demonstrated, that the progress of life on the earth has been the continuous equilibra-

[1] See above, chapters xii. and xiii.

tion of the organism with its environment. In the maintenance of such an equilibrium life has been shown to consist. Accordingly, as we have seen, if the environment is suddenly and violently altered, the organism perishes; but when it is altered slowly, the organism slowly adapts itself to it. If the adaptation is not completed within a single generation, nevertheless a sufficient number of generations will complete it, just as the children and grandchildren of an emigrant become more and more thoroughly acclimated to their new home.

It is now to be shown that civilization is a slow process of breeding, of adaptation, of acclimatization—mental and moral, as well as physical,—of equilibration between the Community and the Environment. From age to age the environment is slowly but incessantly changing, and to its gradual changes the human race, embodied in communities, is continually adapting itself. As just observed, I am not referring to the physical environment alone; for in dealing with society we have to take into the account those psychological factors which have been shown to be by far the most considerable of all. Leaving out of the account all minor considerations of climate, food, or other physical circumstances, and looking at the psychological factors alone, we must admit that the environment is slowly but constantly changing. Every city that is built, every generalization that is reached, every invention that is made, every new principle of action that is suggested, alters in some degree the social environment,—alters the sum-total of external relations to which the community must adjust itself by instituting new internal relations. The entire organized experience of each generation, so far as it is perpetuated by literature or oral tradition, adds an item to the environment of the next succeeding generation; so that the sum-total of the circumstances to which each generation is required to conform itself, is somewhat different from the sum-total of

circumstances to which the immediately preceding generation was required to conform itself. Thus the community, by the inevitable results of its own psychical activity, is continually modifying the environment; and to the environment, as thus continually modified, the community must reciprocally conform itself.

Now in the primitive, isolated, savage condition of mankind, what was the environment of each family or petty tribe, and what kind of emotional activity was it fitted to awaken? The unanimous testimony of scientific explorers, and others who have carefully studied the primitive phases of society, leaves us in little doubt as to this question. As Mr. M'Lennan concisely expresses it, "The state of *hostility* is the normal state of the race in early times."[1] The environment of each little tribe is a congeries of neighbouring hostile tribes; and the necessity of escaping captivity or death involves continual readiness for warfare, and the continual manifestation of the entire class of warlike unsocial passions. While, on the other hand, the tribe is so small and homogeneous, that the opportunity for the exercise of sympathetic and social feelings is confined chiefly to the conjugal and parental relations. *Nevertheless in the exercise of these feelings in these relations are contained the germs of all subsequent social progress.* While without the limited sphere of the tribe all is hatred, revenge, and desire to domineer, within the limits of the tribe there is room for the rudimentary display of such feelings as loyalty, gratitude, equity, family affection, personal friendship, and regard for the claims of others. Since these feelings can be exercised only within family or tribal limits, it follows that the sphere for their exercise is relatively small; while as the hostile or egoistic feelings are conformed to the whole environment outside of the tribe, it follows that the sphere for their exercise is large. Hence, in this primitive state of society, the egoistic feelings, being

[1] *Primitive Marriage*, p. 134.

oftenest called into play in the habitual occupations of life, will be most active and will overbalance the altruistic feelings. While, on the other hand, as the kindlier sympathies are but nascent, even the altruistic feelings, such as they are, will be strongly tinged with egoism. The highest emotion attainable will be clannishness, and the highest rule of duty will be that which enjoins loyalty to the tribal patriarch. This is actually found to be the emotional and ethical condition of primitively organized communities, wherever they have been attentively studied by competent observers. Such, for example, has been the state of things existing from time immemorial among the American Indians, among the Polynesians, and among the Arabs of the desert; and these aspects of clan-society, in a somewhat later stage, among the Scottish Highlanders, are well pourtrayed in several of the Waverley Novels.

Now what is it that chiefly determines the slow development of the altruistic feelings and the gradual atrophy of the egoistic feelings? Obviously it is the growth of the community in size and complexity,—the gradual enlargement of the area over which the altruistic feelings extend, and the gradual increase in the number of social situations which demand the exercise of those feelings. These conditions are partly fulfilled when the tribal community grows to a vast size, remaining structurally a tribe with a patriarchal head,—as was the case in ancient Egypt, Assyria, Persia and India, and as is still the case in China. But they are still better fulfilled when the community increases in the complexity of its internal relations, and, instead of remaining a tribe, becomes a federation of civic bodies, as in ancient Greece, or a single great civic body, uniting various tribal elements, as in ancient Rome. In each of these cases, the increased power of self-protection renders warfare less necessary and frequent, and the partial supplanting of the primitive predatory life by the occupations of agriculture and trade begins to make men

more and more dependent on one another over a wider and wider area, and to create a whole class of interests to which warfare and destructiveness are more and more inimical. And in the latter case, where the community assumes a civic character, the rise of a genuine political life begins to make men operate on each other by indirect compulsion, or by persuasion, rather than by direct and brutal compulsion; and the highest attainable ethical feeling is no longer clannishness, but patriotism, in the exalted sense in which that word was understood by the Greeks and Romans. Note also that under the influence of this high ethical feeling, even military life loses its primitive purely egoistic character, and becomes a school of self-discipline and self-sacrifice, nourishing in no slight degree the altruistic feelings. If we compare the campaigns of Marathon and Thermopylai with the expedition of a band of Highlanders in execution of a blood-feud, or with the excursion of a party of Red Indians on the war-path, we shall find no difficulty in realizing the force of these considerations.

But, like other phenomena in nature, our ethical feelings are not sharply marked off from each other. There is a selfish as well as a sympathetic side to patriotism (understanding the word always as the Greeks and Romans understood it.) At the one extreme, patriotism is akin to clannishness; at the other extreme, it becomes so wide as to resemble cosmopolitanism. As long as the purely civic structure of society lasted, the clannish element was distinctly present in patriotism. Greek history, after the expulsion of the Persians, is the history of the struggle between the higher and the lower patriotism,—between the two feelings known to the Greeks as Pan-Hellenism and Autonomism, represented respectively by Athens and by the Doric communities. The mournful history of Thukydides tells us how autonomism won the day, entailing the moral and political failure of Greek civilization.

But when Rome had extended her beneficent sway over all the precincts of the Mediterranean, uniting communities hitherto autonomous and hostile by common interests of culture and of commerce, and bringing aggressive warfare to an end in the *Pax Romana*, then there became possible a cosmopolitan spirit, a Christian feeling, which regarded all men as legally and ethically equal,—equal before the Emperor, and equal before God. To trace the slow growth of this feeling in the annals of Roman law and of Stoic philosophy, and to observe its culmination in the genesis of Christianity,[1] is to obtain the key to Roman history.

But great political changes were necessary before Rome could carry to the end its great work,—partly because it had increased in size so much faster than it increased in structure. It crushed autonomism too rapidly. It developed imperialism at the expense of nationality. And hence the time at last arrived when the mutual cohesion of its provinces became too slight to withstand those barbaric assaults from without, which—as we should be careful to remember—had all along been intermittently attempted from the days of Brennus to those of Alaric. For a time, European society seemed likely to disintegrate into a set of tribal communities. But the old Empire had done its work too thoroughly for that. Roman principles, embodied in the Catholic Church, and in the renovated Empire of Charles the Great, exerted an organizing power which prevailed over the spirit of clannish isolation, and by effecting the grand series of compromises which we vaguely designate as the feudal system, laid the basis of modern society.

If now we examine the ethical circumstances of that vast modern fabric which has been reared upon material supplied

[1] Of course it is not meant to imply that other elements were not at work in the genesis of Christianity. The growth of what Matthew Arnold calls the "spirit of Hebraism," not in Judæa merely, but throughout the Græco-Roman world, is an interesting phenomenon in this connection, but the treatment of it does not fall within the scope of the present exposition.

in the older days of Rome—and which owes so much of its permanent character to the labours of the great Catholic and Imperial statesmen of the Middle Ages—we shall find that the process here described has been continually going on. For the primitive normal state of warfare there has been gradually substituted a normal state of peace. While in primitive times the interests of men were supposed to coincide only throughout the limited area of a petty clan, they are now seen to coincide throughout vast areas, and the railway, the steamship, and the telegraph are daily bringing communities into closer union, and, as George Eliot well expresses it, "making self-interest a duct for sympathy." The spirit of Christianity, first rendered possible by Roman cosmopolitanism, has made, and is ever making, wider and deeper conquests as civilization advances. By the primitive savage moral duties were imperfectly recognized, but only within the limits of the clan. By the Greek the ethical code was enlarged, but it was a code not applicable to barbarians. The mediæval Christian had a still longer list of duties owed by him to all mankind, his brethren in the sight of God; and to the ancient conception of justice thus materially widened, he added, in elementary shape, the conception of benevolence or the "enthusiasm of humanity;" but the familiar maxim that "no faith need be kept with heretics" shows that even to his conception of duty there were practical limits narrower than would now be admitted. The modern, on the other hand, recognizes that he owes certain duties to all men with whom he may be brought into contact, not because they are his kindred, or his neighbours, or his countrymen, or his fellow-Christians, but because they are his fellow-men. Such is our ethical standard, however imperfectly conformed to; and neither ancient nor mediæval had such an ethical standard. Compare also the ideal types of perfect manhood at the two extremes of civilization within our ken. The primitive type is the man of intense personality,

with an enormous sense of his own importance, easily roused to paroxysms of anger, brooking no contradiction, disregardful of the feelings of others, domineering over all within his reach. The modern type is the man of mild personality, shunning the appearance of self-assertion, slow to anger, patient of contradiction, mindful of the feelings of those about him, unwilling to "make trouble." Such is the contrast between the typical ancient and the typical modern; and it implies a prodigious alteration in the dominant ethical feelings of the progressive portion of our race.

This change, as we now see, has been wrought by the slow but incessant modification of the social environment to which each generation of men has had to conform its actions. The altruistic feelings, finding at each successive epoch a wider scope for action, have become gradually strengthened by use; while the egoistic feelings, being less and less imperatively called into play, have become gradually weakened by disuse. And this change in the environment we perceive to have been wrought by the continuous growth of the community in size and complexity. Where, as among stationary tribes of savages, there has been no such growth, there the moral type of the primeval man is still to be found; and where, as among the stationary communities of Asia, there has been growth in size without corresponding growth in complexity, there the moral type is intermediate between that of the barbarian and that of the inheritor of Roman civilization. Thus the progress of society is a mighty process of equilibration or adjustment, in the course of which men's rules of action and emotional incentives to action become ever more and more perfectly fitted to the requirements arising from the circumstance of their aggregation into communities.

Here we have arrived at a rudimentary conception of the law of social progress, so far as it can be obtained from a comprehensive historical induction, aided and verified by deduction from a few fundamental truths of biology. The

foregoing discussion has brought out one point of fundamental importance, in which the development of social life agrees with the development of organic life: both are continuous processes of adjustment or equilibration. But in all this there is nothing more than might have been anticipated. Since the phenomena of society are really but the phenomena of life, specialized by the addition of new groups of circumstances; we must expect to find that the law of social evolution will be identical with the law of organic evolution, save only that it will require an all-important additional clause to express the results of the action of the superadded circumstances. Let us then seek to ascertain definitely,—*first*, in what respects the two kinds of evolution agree, and *secondly*, in what respects they differ.

In the first place the evolution of society, no less than the evolution of life, conforms to that universal law of evolution discovered by Mr. Spencer, and illustrated at length in earlier chapters. The brief survey just taken shows us that social progress consists primarily in the integration of small and simple communities into larger communities that are of higher and higher orders of composition; and in the more and more complete subordination of the psychical forces which tend to maintain isolation, to the psychical forces which tend to maintain aggregation. In these respects the prime features of social progress are the prime features of evolution in general.

In the second place, the progress of society exhibits those secondary features of differentiation and integration which evolution universally exhibits. The advance from indefinite homogeneity to definite heterogeneity in structure and function is a leading characteristic of social progress. On considering primitive societies, we find them affected by no causes of heterogeneity except those resulting from the establishment of the various family relationships. As Sir Henry Maine has shown, in early times the family and not the individual was the social unit. In the absence of any-

thing like national or even civic organization, each family chief was a monarch in miniature, uniting in his own person the functions of king, priest, judge, and parliament; yet he was scarcely less a digger and hewer than his subject children, wives, and brethren. Commercially, it is needless to say, all primitive communities are homogeneous. In any barbarous tribe the number of different employments is very limited, and such as there are may be undertaken indiscriminately by everyone. Every man is his own butcher and baker, his own tailor and carpenter, his own smith, and his own weapon maker. Now the progress of such a society toward a civilized condition begins with the differentiation and integration of productive occupations. That each specialization of labour entails increased efficiency of production, which reacting brings out still greater specialization, is known to every tyro in political economy. Nor is it less obvious that, with the advance of civilization, labour has been steadily increasing in coherent heterogeneity, not only with regard to its division among different sets of mutually-dependent labourers, but also with regard to its processes, and even its instruments. The distinguishing characteristic of modern machinery, as compared with the rude tools of the Middle Ages or the clumsy apparatus of the ancients, is its definite heterogeneity. The contrast between the steam-engine of to-day and the pulleys, screws, and levers of a thousand years ago assures us that the growing complexity of the objects which labour aims at is paralleled by the growing complexity of the modes of attaining them. Turning to government, we see that by differentiation in the primeval community some families acquired supreme power, while others sank, though in different degrees, to the rank of subjects. The integration of allied families into tribes, and of adjacent tribes into nations, as well as that kind of integration exhibited at a later date in the closely-knit diplomatic inter-relations of different countries, are marked steps in social progress. Next may be mentioned the differ-

entiation of the governing power into the civil and the ecclesiastical; while by the side of these ceremonial government grows up insensibly as a third power, regulating the minor details of social intercourse none the less potently because not embodied in statutes and edicts. Comparing the priests and augurs of antiquity with the dignitaries of the mediæval Church, the much greater heterogeneity of the latter system becomes manifest. Civil government likewise has become differentiated into executive, legislative, and judicial. Executive government has been divided into many branches, and diversely in different nations. A comparison of the Athenian popular government with the representative systems of the present day shows that the legislative function has no more than any of the others preserved its original homogeneity. While the contrast between the *Aula Regis* of the Norman kings and the courts of common law, equity, and admiralty, —county courts, queen's courts, state courts, and federal courts,—which are lineally descended from it, tells us the same story concerning the judicial power. Nor should it be forgotten that the steady expansion of legal systems, to meet the exigencies which civilization renders daily more complex, is an advance from relatively indefinite homogeneity to relatively definite heterogeneity.

Obviously, however, our task is not completed when we have pointed out this general coincidence between the development of society and the development of life. Nor can the universal law here illustrated be the special law of social progress for which we are seeking. By reason of its very comprehensiveness, the law of universal evolution cannot be regarded as supplying the precise kind of information we desire concerning the relations of social to organic phenomena. By its aid we have found it possible to interpret not only the development of life, intelligence, and society, but also the genesis of planetary systems and the evolution of the earth. It is therefore the law not only

of social, psychical, and vital changes, but also of inorganic changes. Underlying all the sciences of genesis, and fusing them into one grand science of cosmogony, it utters no truth concerning organic or social development which is not equally true of all development. Thus while it is indeed, in the deepest sense, the ultimate law to which organic and super-organic changes conform, it is silent respecting the differential characteristics by which these changes are distinguished from inorganic changes. Already in treating of the evolution of life we saw that the ultimate and general formula needed to be supplemented by a derivative and special formula, which should describe organic development in terms inapplicable to inorganic phenomena. And this formula we found in the definition of life as the continuous adjustment of inner to outer relations, upon which also was afterwards based our entire theory of the evolution of intelligence.

Now the historic survey into which we were led a moment ago, while inquiring into the progress of moral feelings, showed us that, in this respect also, the evolution of society agrees with the evolution of life in general. The progress of a community, as of an organism, is a process of *adaptation*, —a continuous establishment of inner relations in conformity to outer relations. If we contemplate material civilization under its widest aspect, we discover its legitimate aim to be the attainment and maintenance of an equilibrium between the wants of men and the outward means of satisfying them. And while approaching this goal, society is ever acquiring in its economic structure both greater heterogeneity and greater specialization. It is not only that agriculture, manufactures, commerce, legislation, the acts of the ruler, the judge, and the physician, have since ancient times grown immeasurably multiform, both in their processes and in their appliances; but it is also that this specialization has resulted in the greatly increased ability of society to adapt itself to the emergencies by which it is ever beset. The

history of scientific progress is in like manner the history of an advance from a less complete toward a more complete correspondence between the order of our conceptions and the order of phenomena. Truth—the end of all honest and successful research—is attained when subjective relations are adjusted to objective relations. And what is the consummation of moral progress but the thorough adaptation of the desires of each individual to the requirements arising from the coexistent desires of all neighbouring individuals? Thus the phenomena of social and of organic progress are seen to correspond to a degree not contemplated by those thinkers who, from Plato to Hobbes, have instituted a comparison between them. The dominant characteristics of all life are those in which social and individual life agree.

Let us now examine more closely the relations between the Community and the Environment. From the twofold circumstance that life is high according as the organism is heterogeneous, and also according as it is adjusted to surrounding conditions, may be derived the corollary that *the heterogeneity of the environment is the chief proximate determining cause of social progress.* Thus we may understand why civilization advances so much more rapidly in modern than it did in ancient times.[1] As Sir Charles Lyell observes; "We see in our own times that the rate of progress in the arts and sciences proceeds in a geometrical ratio as knowledge increases, and so, when we carry back our retrospect into the past, we must be prepared to find the signs of retardation augmenting in a like geometrical ratio; so that the progress of a thousand years at a remote period may correspond to that of a century in modern times, and in ages still more remote Man would more and more resemble the brutes in that attribute which causes one generation exactly to imitate in all its ways the generation which preceded it."[2] That the process is here the same in social and in

[1] See above, p. 72.

[2] *Antiquity of Man*, p. 377.

organic life, Sir Charles Lyell already suspects; for he elsewhere observes that the lower the place of organic beings "in a graduated scale, or the simpler their structure, the more persistent are they in form and organization. In whatever manner the changes have been brought about, the rate of change is greater where the grade of organization is higher." And this fact results from the more complex relations of the higher beings to their environment. Applying these considerations to history, it will be seen that, owing to the political isolation of ancient communities, the heterogeneity of their environments must have been inconsiderable. Holding little intercourse with each other, and accommodating their deeds and opinions mostly to the conditions existing at home, their progress was usually feeble and halting. Owing to the enormous heterogeneity of the environment to which modern communities are forced to adjust themselves, progress in later ages has been far more rapid and far more stable than of old. The physical well-being of an ancient Greek was not enhanced by an invention made in China, nor could his philosophy derive useful hints from theories propounded in India. But in these days scarcely anything can happen in one part of our planet which does not speedily affect every other part. The physical environment of a modern European extends over a great part of the earth's surface, and his psychical environment is scarcely limited in time or space. His welfare is not unfrequently affected by accidents occurring at the antipodes, while his plans for the coming year are often shaped with conscious or unconscious reference to events which happened centuries ago. That the rapid and permanent character of modern progress is in great measure due to this circumstance, will be denied by no one. And thus is explained the wonderful civilizing effect of various events which have from time to time brought together distant sections of mankind; among which it will be sufficient merely to name the campaigns of

Alexander, the spread of Roman dominion, the Arabian conquests, the Crusades, and the voyages of Columbus, Magellan, and De Gama. The invention of printing, increasing the rapidity and the frequency with which the thoughts of various minds are brought into contact, offers another illustration; and in a similar way is to be explained the civilizing agency of railroads and telegraphs.

Comparing these deductions with the historical survey of ethical development above taken, we arrive at a set of mutually harmonious conclusions. We see that the process of intellectual and moral adaptation which constitutes social progress is determined by the steadily increasing heterogeneity of the social environment. And we see that this increased heterogeneity of the environment is caused by the integration or growing interdependence of communities that were originally isolated. We have now to examine this process of integration somewhat more in detail. By instituting a novel comparison between the processes of organic and of social life, we shall be led directly to the special law of progress for which we are seeking.

Observe first that the living beings which are lowest, or next to the lowest, in the scale of organization—as, for example, the protococcus and the amœba—are nothing but simple cells. It has been shown, by Mr. Spencer, that progress in morphological composition, both in the animal and in the vegetable kingdoms, consists primarily in the union of these simple cells into aggregates of higher and higher orders of complexity. Now in the study of social evolution we are met by precisely similar phenomena. Let us consider what is implied by the conclusions at which Sir Henry Maine has arrived, in his profound treatise on "Ancient Law," by an elaborate inquiry into early ideas of property, contract, and testamentary succession, and into primitive criminal legislation. "Society in ancient times," says Sir Henry Maine, "was not what it is assumed to be

at present, a collection of *individuals*. In fact, and in the view of the men who composed it, it was an aggregation of *families*. The contrast may be most forcibly expressed by saying that the *unit* of an ancient society was the *family*, of a modern society the *individual*." [1] But originally the family-government excluded not only individual independence, but also state supremacy. The sole government actual or possible was that exercised by the male head of a family-group. By slow stages various family-groups closely akin in blood appear to have become integrated into tribes or clans, community of descent being still the only conceivable bond which could hold together a number of individuals in the same political aggregate. At a later stage the limits of the tribe were further enlarged by the important legal fiction of "adoption," or the pretence that newly-added members were descended from some conspicuous common ancestor of the tribe. Vestiges of a time when there were no aggregations of men more extensive than the tribal community thus constituted, and when there was no sovereign authority save that exercised by the head of the tribe, may be found in every part of the world,[2] and among totally-savage races this state of things still continues. Now we shall find something more than an instructive analogy in the comparison of the primitive family-group to a unicellular organism, for such a comparison will enable us to realize that in social and in organic evolution the process of integration has been substantially the same. The first well-marked stage in coalescence is the formation of the tribe or clan,

[1] *Ancient Law*. p. 126.

[2] "The γένος of Athens, the *gens* of Rome, the *mark* or *gemeinde* of the Teutonic nations, the village community of the East . . . the Irish clan, are all essentially the same thing"—Freeman, *Comparative Politics*, p. 102.

See, among other authorities, Volney's *View of the United States*, p. 397; Phillipp on *Jurisprudence*, p. 207; Charles Comte, *Traité de Législation*, liv. iii., chap. 28; Grote, *History of Greece*, vol. iii., pp. 49—69; Gibbon (Paris edit.), vol. iii., p. 243; Vico, *Scienza Nuova*, *Opere*, tom. iv., pp. 23, 35, 40; Aristotle, *Eth. Nikom.* viii. 14; Tacitus, *Germania*, vii.; Cæsar, *Bell. Gall.* vi. 22, 23.

which may be compared to those lowly organisms made up by the union of amœba-like units with but little specialization of structure or function. At this stage social organization is but one step removed from that absolute and ferocious anarchy which characterizes the non-social life of brutes. "Mistrust, jealousy, secret ambushes, and implacable vengeances" characterize the mutual relations of these social "aggregates of the first order." Hostility is the rule, and peace the exception. The repulsive forces are stronger and the cohesive forces weaker than at any subsequent period. As we have seen above, the selfish impulses which tend to maintain savage isolation are as yet unchecked save by instinctive loyalty within the tribal limits.

The coalescence of such tribes into civic communities is the formation of social "aggregates of the second order." For a long time these higher aggregates retain conspicuous traces of their mode of composition, as in Greece and Rome,[1] until increasing social heterogeneity obliterates the original lines of demarcation; while new divisions spring up, resulting from the integration of like parts, as is seen in the guilds of mediæval Europe, and still better in the localization of industries which marks the present time.

The coalescence of civic and tribal communities into the nation—an "aggregate of the third order"—is well exemplified in the history of France, which, from a disorderly collection of independent baronies, has passed by well-defined transitions into a perfectly integral nation. The attainment of this stage is indispensable to a career of permanent progress. As hinted above, the premature overthrow of the Hellenic political system is to be attributed

[1] The structure of the Amphiktyonic union shows "that the system of cities with which we are so familiar in Grecian history grew out of an earlier system of tribes." Freeman, *Comparative Politics*, p. 88. Further evidence, in abundance, may be found in the succeeding pages of that excellent book, which reads, from beginning to end, almost like a commentary upon this chapter.

to its very incomplete integration. An aggregate of the national type was in process of formation by the extensive coalescence of maritime cities under the leadership of Athens, when the Peloponnesian war intervened, vindicating the superiority of selfish autonomy, and showing by its result that the civilizing spirit of nationality was as yet too feeble to prevail.

It was first under Roman dominion that national aggregation and the feeling of national solidarity began to be brought to something like completeness. By absorbing nearly all the petty communities then existing within the limits of the Mediterranean world, and by gradually extending to their members the privileges of citizenship, Rome succeeded in dealing to the passion for autonomy a blow from which it has never recovered; while the enormous extent of the Empire, and its ethnic heterogeneity, imparted to the national spirit thus evoked, a cosmopolitan character destined to be of prodigious service to civilization. The influence of these circumstances upon the attitude of Christianity I have already alluded to, and it cannot be too strongly insisted upon. No human mind could have even conceived, much less have carried into execution, the idea of a universal religion, if the antique state of social isolation had not previously been brought to a close in universal empire. If Christianity had appeared four centuries earlier than it did, it would, like Buddhism, have assumed the garb of a local religious reformation. Or if it could have aimed at anything higher and more comprehensive than this, its preaching would have fallen upon ears not ready to receive it. All the Oriental enthusiasm, all the Hellenic subtlety, of Paul, could have effected nothing, had he visited Athens in the days of Plato and Diogenes. But the cosmopolitan element in Roman civilization was just that which Christianity most readily assimilated, and which it intensified by setting up a new principle of common action in place of the

primeval principle of community of race. From this happy concurrence of circumstances there was formed, upon the ruins of Paganism, that religious organization which alone, of all churches that have existed, has earned the glorious name of Catholic. Disgusted at some of her high-handed proceedings in later times, Protestant historians have too generally forgotten that the Roman Church, by co-ordinating the most vigorous and progressive elements of ancient life, prepared the way both for the ubiquity and for the permanence of modern civilization. Had the ecclesiastical system of the Empire perished, along with the breaking up of its political system; had there been really that wreck of ancient institutions in the fifth century which was formerly supposed to have occurred, until Mr. Bryce and Mr. Freeman dispelled the gross error; it is difficult to see how mediæval European history could have been politically anything more than a repetition of Grecian history, save only in the extent of its geographical range. Whoever is disposed to doubt so emphatic an assertion will do well duly to ponder the fact that the newly-arriving Teutonic subjects of the Empire (who would, in such case, have come as foreign conquerors) had not advanced beyond the stage of tribal organization. On their further aggregation into rural and civic bodies, the autonomous spirit would have acquired an ascendency which it might well have taken another more fortunate Athenian federation, or another all-absorbing Roman domination, thoroughly to destroy. Even as it was, it required all the immense power of the Church, unflinchingly exercised through many generations, to prevent European society from disintegrating into a mere collection of mutually repelling tribal communities. But the Church not only preserved the best social results of Roman dominion, by hastening the consolidation of each embryonic nationality; it also, by its peculiar position as common arbiter between the different states thus arising, assisted in the

formation of a new social aggregate of a yet higher order. The modern system of independent nationalities held in virtual federation—not by international codes, but by the possession of guiding principles of conduct more or less heartily reverenced by all—is chiefly the work of the Roman Church. Here, finally, we have reached a system whose structure bears in the highest degree the marks of permanence. It is sustained by the ever-deepening sentiments of cosmopolitan philanthropy and universal justice,—the most cohesive of social forces, as the spirit of local selfishness was the most disruptive.

Here it might seem that we have obtained all the data requisite for enunciating our law of social progress. But something is still wanting. Our law of progress, if now enunciated, would be too general. It would cover alike the phenomena of social and of organic life. In both there is an advance from indeterminate uniformity to determinate multiformity; in both there is a continuous adaptation of the organism or the community to its environment; and in both there is a continuous integration, entailing an advance from incoherence to coherence of structure. We must now start in search of that all-important clause which shall express the essential difference between organic and social progress.

In the ancient family-community, as delineated by Sir Henry Maine, the separate existence of the individuals was almost submerged and lost in the corporate existence of the aggregate. Personal freedom was entirely unrecognized. To family duties all individual rights were subjected. By a tie, religious no less than political, the members of the family were all held in allegiance to its oldest male representative. The father might abandon his son in infancy, and when grown up might sell him as a slave, or put him to death for disobedience. And the wife was to an equal extent in the power of her husband, to whom she legally stood in the relation of a daughter, so that marriage was but the ex-

change of one form of servitude for another. No transfer of property was valid, unless the persons conducting it swore in the name of some ancestor,—dead ages ago, it might be; for so absolute was the authority of the *paterfamilias* that it could not be conceived as departing from him at death, but must be exercised by him, through the medium of prescriptive ceremonial, over whole generations to come. Nothing, in short, was regulated by *contract*, but everything was determined by *status*.[1] And this is the fact which irretrievably demolishes Rousseau's theory that social aggregation is due to a primitive compact. That theory is merely an illegitimate attempt to explain an ancient phenomenon by causes which have had only a modern existence.[2] The member of a primitive tribal community had no conception of contract; what he was born to do, belonged to his status; and that he must do. The prevalence of this state of things in the empires of the East is chief among many converging proofs that those nations are nothing but immense tribes, or aggregates of the first order.

With the rise of higher aggregates, such as states, civic or imperial, this sinking of the individual in the corporate existence still for some time continued. The rights and duties of the individual were still unrecognized, save in so far as they followed from the status in which he happened to be placed. In republican Rome, and in the Hellenic communities, the welfare of the citizen was universally postponed to the welfare of the state. But circumstances too complicated to be here detailed, of which the chief symptom was the increasing importance assigned by Roman jurisprudence to contracts, resulted, at an advanced period of the empire,

[1] This term is well defined by Heineccius:—"Status est qualitas cujus ratione homines diverso jure utuntur. . . Alio jure utitur liber homo; alio servus; alio civis; alio peregrinus." *Recitationes*, lib. i. tit. 3.

[2] See the discussion of the doctrine in Austin, *Province of Jurisprudence*, pp. 331—371; Kant, *Rechtslehre*, Th. ii., Abschn. i.; Stahl, *Philosophie des Rechts*, ii. 142; Maine, *Ancient Law*, chap. iv

in the more or less complete recognition of individual rights and obligations. On the rise of the feudal system, the relations of vassal to suzerain were, through the influence of Roman conceptions, extensively regulated by contract; and it is in this respect that the feudal institutions are most widely distinguished "from the unadulterated usages of primitive races."[1] It was, I believe, mainly owing to this that the integration of feudal lordships into nations was accompanied by the enlargement of individual liberty to a much greater extent than the integration of ancient clans, gentes, and phratries into civic communities. The Roman Church also aided in promoting the freedom of individuals, as well as in facilitating the consolidation of states. By the more or less strict enforcement of clerical celibacy, it maintained in the midst of hereditary aristocracy a comparatively democratic organization, where advancement largely depended upon moral excellence or intellectual ability. And preserving, by the same admirable institution, its independence of feudal patronage, it was often enabled successfully to interpose between the tyranny of kings and the helplessness of subjects. To ecclesiastical celibacy, more than to almost any other assignable institution, we owe our emancipation from ancient patriarchal conceptions of social duty. The development of industry, crossing in various ways the antique divisions of society, has contributed to the same result; until, in modern times, the primitive mode of organization is almost entirely effaced, leaving but few barely traceable vestiges. Individual rights and obligations, from being nothing, have come to be all in all. While originally the individual was thought to exist only for the sake of the state, the state is now regarded as existing only for the sake of the individual.

It will thus be seen that the very same process, which has resulted in the formation of social aggregates of a higher and

[1] Maine, op. cit. p. 365.

higher order, has also resulted in the more and more complete subordination of the requirements of the aggregate to the requirements of the individual. And be it further noticed, that the relative strength of the altruistic feelings which maintain the stability of the highest social aggregation, maintains also to the fullest extent the independence of its individual members; while the relative strength of the egoistic feelings which in early times prevented the existence of any higher organization than the family or tribe, was also incompatible with individual freedom of action. Now this is precisely the reverse of the state of things which we find in organic evolution. In organic development, the individual life of the parts is more and more submerged in the corporate life of the whole. In social development, corporate life is more and more subordinated to individual life. The highest organic life is that in which the units have the least possible freedom. The highest social life is that in which the units have the greatest possible freedom. This feature of social evolution is most conveniently described by Schelling's term *individuation*, which is employed in a kindred sense both in Mr. Spencer's and in other modern works on biology.

Thus we have at last reached the conclusion in quest of which we set out. Supplementing our previous results, according to which organic and social evolution were seen to agree, by our present result, according to which they are seen to differ, we obtain a formula for social evolution which may be regarded as fundamentally accurate. We obtain the Law of Progress, which may be provisionally stated as follows:—

"*The Evolution of Society is a continuous establishment of psychical relations within the Community, in conformity to physical and psychical relations arising in the Environment; during which, both the Community and the Environment pass from a state of relatively indefinite, incoherent homogeneity to a state of relatively definite, coherent heterogeneity; and during*

which, the constituent Units of the Community become ever more distinctly individuated."

In the next chapter I shall proceed to show how this exceedingly general and technical formula includes and justifies whatever is defensible in sundry less abstract generalizations, expressed in more popular language, by Comte and Buckle. We shall be called upon to pass in review certain phases of social evolution, and to criticize, with the aid of the theorems now at our disposal, the claims of Comte to be regarded as the founder of sociology.

CHAPTER XIX.

ILLUSTRATIONS AND CRITICISMS.

THE discussion contained in the foregoing chapter has shown to what a notable extent the phenomena of social evolution may be expressed, with the strictest accuracy, by formulas originally invented to describe the evolution of life in general. Let us briefly review the results which we have already obtained.

First, we saw that social as well as organic evolution consists in the continuous adaptation of the community, or organism, to the environment. Or, expressing the same thing in other words, social progress is a continuous establishment of inner relations in conformity to outer relations.

Secondly, we saw that in the course of this adaptation the community, like the organism, continually increases in definite heterogeneity, through successive differentiations and integrations.

Thirdly, we saw that in the community, as in the organism, the increase in internal heterogeneity is determined by the continuous increase of heterogeneity in the environment.

Fourthly, we saw that the increase of heterogeneity in the environment is determined by the successive integration of communities into more and more complex and coherent aggregates. And this law also holds of organic progress.

These four generalizations, expressing the points in which social and organic development coincide, were summed up in the two first clauses of our law of progress. They are immediate corollaries of the law of universal evolution and of the definition of life as adjustment. They are not to be understood as mere expressions of striking analogies. They are to be understood as implying that the evolution of life and the evolution of society are, to a certain extent and in the most abstract sense, identical processes. Such a conclusion, indeed, became inevitable the moment we were brought to admit that the phenomena of society constitute but a specialized division of the phenomena of psychical life.

Nevertheless it would be a grave error to infer, from this necessary coincidence in development, that a community is nothing more than a kind of organism, as Plato imagined in his "Republic," and Hobbes in his "Leviathan." When we go so far as to compare the metropolis of a community to the heart of an organism, its roads to blood-vessels, its circulating commodities to circulating nutritive materials, its money to blood-corpuscles, its channels for transmitting intelligence to nerve-axes, and the individuals of which it is composed to physiologic units; we are instituting a series of analogies, which are no doubt of considerable value in the study both of history and of political economy. In his essay on the "Social Organism," Mr. Spencer has traced a great number of such analogies, which are no less instructive than curious, but they are after all analogies and not homologies. So when M. Littré points out that the study of political economy stands in the same relation to the science of sociology as the study of the nutritive functions to the science of biology, he reveals an analogy of great philosophical value. But we nevertheless feel that there is a wide distinction between an organism and a community, which it would be absurd to ignore; and Hobbes's conception of society as a vast Leviathan strikes us as grotesque.

This insuperable distinction is the fact that in a community the psychical life is all in the parts, while in an organism the psychical life is all in the whole. The living units of society "do not and cannot lose individual consciousness," while "the community as a whole has no corporate consciousness." "The corporate life must here be subservient to the lives of the parts; instead of the lives of the parts being subservient to the corporate life."[1] The historical induction at the close of the preceding chapter showed us that such has been the case. While during the advance toward greater heterogeneity and coherence, the original lines of demarcation between communities have been ever becoming effaced as the communities have become integrated into higher and higher aggregates, we saw that as a part of the very same process the individualities of the members of society have been ever increasing in definiteness and ever acquiring a wider scope for activity. And we saw that this process not only has ever gone on, but must continue to go on; since, by the law of use and disuse, the sympathetic or social feelings must continue to grow at the expense of the selfish or anti-social feelings; and since this slow emotional modification, which makes possible the higher integration of society, ensures also the higher individuation of its members. "Progress, therefore, is not an accident, but a necessity. Instead of civilization being artificial, it is a part of nature; all of a piece with the development of the embryo or the unfolding of a flower. The modifications mankind have undergone, and are still undergoing, result from a law underlying the whole organic creation; and provided the human race continues, and the constitution of things remains the same, those modifications must end in completeness."[2] As surely as the astronomer can predict the future state of the heavens, the sociologist can foresee that the process of adaptation must go on until

[1] Spencer's *Essays*, 2nd series, p. 154.
[2] Spencer, *Social Statics*, p. 65.

in a remote future it comes to an end in proximate equilibrium. The increasing interdependence of human interests must eventually go far to realize the dream of the philosophic poet, of a Parliament of Man, a Federation of the World,

"When the kindly earth shall slumber, lapt in universal law,"

and when the desires of each individual shall be in proximate equilibrium with the means of satisfying them and with the simultaneous desires of all surrounding individuals. Such a state implies at once the highest possible individuation and the highest possible integration among the units of the community; and it is the ideal goal of intellectual and moral progress.

Thus the fundamental law of progress, as formulated at the close of the last chapter, contains all the provisions requisite in such a formula. It describes, in a single grand generalization, all the phenomena of social evolution, both in so far as they result from the general laws of life, and in so far as they result from the operation of circumstances peculiar to the aggregation of intelligent organisms in a community. And it includes and justifies all the minor generalizations which may be reached by a direct induction from historical phenomena solely.

This law of progress we find to be exceedingly abstract: it expresses a general truth quite completely disengaged from the incidents of particular cases. Such, as we were led to anticipate, must be the character of a law which generalizes a vast number of complex phenomena. A formula which is to include in one expression phenomena so different as the rise of Christianity and the invention of the steam-engine must needs be eminently abstract. To attempt to make it concrete, so as to appeal directly to the historical imagination, would be to deprive it of its universality, to increase its power of expressing some one set of phenomena by rendering it powerless to express some other equally important set.

This consideration explains the manifest failure of all the attempts which have been made to determine the general law of progress by a simple historical induction. Take, for example, the two crude generalizations which pretty nearly sum up the philosophy of history as it is contained in the work of Mr. Buckle; that "scepticism" is uniformly favourable to progress, while the "protective spirit" (or, the spirit of over-legislation) is uniformly detrimental to it. These, in the first place, are generalizations drawn from a peculiar and temporary phase of society and illegitimately extended to all phases of society; and, in the second place, even so far as they go, they have but a limited applicability,—expressing at best certain aspects of intellectual and industrial progress, but leaving quite out of sight that slow moral evolution which underlies the whole. Whatever of truth is contained in these statements is also contained in the formula which I am here expounding, and is much more accurately expressed in the terms of that formula. Scepticism, for instance, in the best sense of the word, is the attitude of mind which is caused by the perception that certain inner psychical relations—say, a given set of beliefs or institutions—have ceased to be adapted to outer relations. The mediæval conception of the world, as presented in Dante's treatise on "The Monarchy," was very closely adapted both to the knowledge and to the social needs of the time. The conception of man as the centre of a universe made solely for his use and behoof, with a sun to give him light by day and a moon and stars to give him light by night, with an Emperor and a Pope divinely appointed to rule him in this life, and an Autocrat in heaven uniting in himself the functions of these two, and ruling nature according to his arbitrary will; this conception, I say, was in harmony both with the best science and with the most urgent social requirements of the time, and the fact of its long duration shows how profound was the harmony. While this state of

things lasted, there was but little room for scepticism. But after a while the psychical environment had so far altered as to be out of balance with this conception of the world. The Copernican revolution unseated Man from his throne in the centre of the universe, and advancing physical generalization cast discredit upon the theory of providential government, and so arose the long line of "infidels" from Bruno and Vanini to Voltaire and Diderot. While, on the other hand, the increasing power of monarchy, especially in France, gradually undermined the moral independence of the Papacy, converting it from an upholder of equity and a friend of the people into an unscrupulous ally of regal usurpation and iniquity; and thus arose the Great Schism, followed by the Protestant revolt and the grand democratic movement which culminated in the French Revolution. Now what is all this infidel rebellion against dogma and democratic rebellion against authority, but the intellectual and moral turbulence caused by the growing conviction that the psychical relations comprised in the authorized conception of the world were out of balance with the new aggregate of relations formed by the discoveries of science and the altered requirements of social existence? And this painful attitude of the mind, prompting men to fresh investigation of the order of nature and to new social re-arrangements, is the stimulus to a new and closer adaptation.

Such is the function of scepticism in the community, and such also is its function in the individual. A person, for instance, is educated in an environment of Presbyterian theology, accepting without question all the doctrines of Calvinism. By and by his environment enlarges. Facts in science or in history, methods of induction, canons of criticism present themselves to his mind as things irreconcilable with his old creed. Hence painful doubt, entailing efforts to escape by modifying the creed to suit new mental exigencies. Hence eager study and further enlargement of

the environment, causing fresh disturbance of equilibrium and renewed doubt resulting in further adaptation. And so the process continues until, if the person in question be sufficiently earnest and sufficiently fortunate, the environment enlarges so far as to comprehend the most advanced science of the day, and the process of adaptation goes on until an approximate equilibrium is attained between the order of conceptions and the order of phenomena, and scepticism, having discharged its function, exists no longer, save in so far as it may be said to survive in the engrained habit of weighing evidence and testing one's hypotheses.

Now to say that scepticism is one of the causes of progress is to make a historical induction which is valuable as far as it goes; but it is at best an empirical generalization. To make it a scientific law, we need to express the function of scepticism in terms of some formula which covers all the phenomena of progress. And who does not see that in so expressing it we are obtaining a far more definite and accurate and serviceable notion than when we merely state vaguely that scepticism is a cause of progress?

Just so with the statement that the protective spirit is a hindrance to progress. By the colloquial phrase "protective spirit," Mr. Buckle means the control, or at least the undue control, of the community over its individual members. Now in estimating the effect of this circumstance upon progress, everything depends upon the precise amount of such control which we are to regard as excessive. But this varies with each epoch of civilization. What would now be intolerable despotism was once needful restraint. You cannot have a constitutional democracy of Vandals or Moguls. So long as men's altruistic feelings are not powerful enough to make them spontaneously respect the claims of their fellows, the only force which can make society hold together is that hero-worship which enjoins implicit obedience to the head of the tribe or state. But, as we have already seen, the

steady growth of altruism at the expense of egoism, which renders possible a more complete social aggregation, renders possible also a more complete development of individual liberty. So that what in one age is a needful control exercised by the community over its members becomes in the next age an undue control. All this is expressed in the law of progress, as here formulated; but it is not expressed, with any approach to accuracy, in the crude statement that the protective spirit is an obstacle to civilization.

Indeed the longer we study this general formula, the more we shall be convinced that it includes and justifies all sound inductions which can be derived from a survey of historical phenomena. As we apply it to the facts of history one after another, we shall see ever more clearly that its very abstractness is its excellence, and that the initial difficulty in thoroughly realizing its import arises from its very fulness of meaning. And we shall become ever more deeply impressed with the belief that no amount of mere historic induction can give us a universally applicable law of social progress, unless our results be deductively interpreted as corollaries from the general laws of life.

We are now in a position to exmaine the claims of Comte to be regarded as the founder of sociology. And first let us note that a law of social progress answering so many requirements as are met by the law above expounded could not have been obtained earlier than the present generation or even than the present decade.

To conceive of sociogeny as a specialized branch of psychogeny, itself a specialized branch of biogeny, was not possible until a general science of genesis had been at least partially instituted. The very idea of a science of genesis as applied to organic phenomena was not elaborated until the appearance of Von Baer's great treatise in 1829. And the conception was then altogether too novel to be worked into the web of philosophy which Comte was weav-

ing. Considering how, throughout the latter part of his life, he steadfastly refrained from the study of contemporary scientific literature, I do not think it likely that Comte ever became aware of the growing prominence of this conception of genesis; and if he had become aware of it he would doubtless have scornfully repudiated it, as he repudiated almost every new conception which was distinctly in advance of the limited scientific knowledge of 1830. The knowledge which Comte was not prepared to utilize at that date, he was certainly not in a condition to utilize at any later period of his life. It was in 1857, the year of Comte's death, that Mr. Spencer, in an essay entitled "Progress: its Law and Cause," first definitely extended the law of organic development to historic phenomena; although he had ever since 1851 been visibly working toward that result, and had in 1855 reached that grand generalization of the development of both life and intelligence, regarded as processes of adjustment, which underlies the law of social progress here expounded. It was this splendid series of researches, culminating in the announcement of the universal law of evolution, in 1861, which supplied a new basis for all the sciences which treat of genesis, and rendered possible the discovery of the special laws of sociogeny. And finally, in 1861, the further clue to these special laws was given by Sir Henry Maine, whose immortal treatise on "Ancient Law" threw an entirely new light upon the primitive structure of society, and demonstrated—what before could only have been surmised—that human society, as earliest organized, consisted of a congeries of tribal communities by the integration of which have arisen the various orders of states and federations known to history.

When, therefore, we inquire whether Comte did or did not create a science of sociology, we need not be surprised if it appears that he did not create such a science. For in sociology, even more than in any other science, the prime requisite

is to formulate the law of evolution—in this case, the order of sequence of historic events from epoch to epoch. So far as a science of society could be founded upon purely statical considerations, the work had already been performed; by Adam Smith, as regards political economy, by Bentham, as regards jurisprudence, and by both these great thinkers, as regards ethics. But ethics, jurisprudence, and political economy, put together, do not make up a science of society, as Comte clearly saw. For in sociology the historical element—the question whence we started and whither we are bound—is the element which takes precedence of all others. Even ethics, jurisprudence, and political economy cannot be placed upon a truly rational basis until we understand the order of intellectual and moral change from epoch to epoch. To understand the "tendencies of the age" is an indispensable pre-requisite for sound sociological thinking as well as for sound political acting. Thus that portion of sociology which treats of genesis is, relatively to the whole science, even more important than the corresponding portions of biology and psychology. In biology pure and simple, we can, as we have seen, obtain a tolerably complete notion of the order of changes in the organism, with but occasional reference to the comparatively stable and unchanging environment. In psychology we have to take the environment into account at every step; but unless we are studying the quite special problem of the growth of the mental faculties, we do not need to refer to a definite and persistent succession of changes in the environment. But in sociology we cannot work in this way. As M. Littré has well pointed out, when we come to study humanity we are met by a new phenomenon unknown in biology or in psychology pure and simple. That new phenomenon is Tradition, or the bequeathing of all its organized intellectual and moral experience by each generation to its successor. Here for the first time we have an environment which is rapidly changing in a definite order

of sequence, and changing by the very activity of the community itself. The organized experience of each generation becomes a part of the environment of its successor, and since in each successive age "the empire of the dead over the living increases," the environment of each generation consists to a greater and greater extent of the sum-total of traditions bequeathed by all past generations. Hence we cannot hope scientifically to comprehend the simplest feature in any given state of the community without reference to ancestral states. The religious phenomena of the present day, for example, cannot be understood without previous knowledge of the whole history of Christianity, and indeed of human speculative thought since men began to be aware of the universe about them. Our political organization can be scientifically interpreted only as the offspring of ancestral political organizations in a series reaching back to the primitive tribal community.[1] And so with all the aspects of society. Whether we are studying a creed, a code of laws, a dialect, a system of philosophy, a congeries of myths, or a set of manners and customs, we can arrive at the rational solution of our problem only through a historical inquiry. Hence the doctrine of genesis, indispensable as it is in the other two organic sciences, becomes, if one may say so, even more indispensable in sociology. Here the whole science rests upon sociogeny, and until we have reached a scientific conception of progress we cannot stir a step.

Thus, in addition to the unparalleled complexity of its phenomena, and to its general dependence both for doctrine and for method upon the simpler sciences, we perceive still another reason why the science of sociology has been the last to be constituted. Resting as it does upon the law of progress, it has had to wait not only until the preceding sciences

[1] See Mr. Freeman's book, *Comparative Politics*,—the work of a great scholar who inherits the gift of Midas, and makes gold of every subject that he touches.

were founded, but until they were sufficiently advanced to supply it with the general formula of organic development, from which alone the law of social progress could be deduced. It was not enough that Bichat had laid the foundations for a general theory of nutrition, reproduction and innervation, or that James Mill had established the fundamental laws of association; though this was indeed much. The new science had to wait until Von Baer had traced the order in which organisms develope, until Mr. Darwin had shown how through heredity and natural selection organisms become adapted to their environments, and until Mr. Spencer had shown how associated ideas and emotions are slowly generated and modified in conformity to surrounding circumstances.

All this, of course, could not be foreseen by Comte. But he nevertheless clearly saw—and it does honour to his philosophic acumen—that a comprehensive theory of social changes can be obtained only by studying them in the order of their historical dependence. He saw that the laws of sociology are at bottom the laws of history. And especially, from the practical point of view, he saw that no general theory fit to serve as a basis for the amelioration of society could be deduced from mere abstract reasonings about human nature, or obtained inductively from the mere observation of contemporary social phenomena. All theories formed in this way, without reference to the order of historic progression, are in danger of being stated too absolutely, and are wont to give birth only to utopian projects. Comte was never weary of pointing out the errors of those political economists who deduce general laws of accumulation and distribution from the industrial phenomena presented by a single country at a particular epoch; or of those moralists who base their theories upon that absurdest of aphorisms, that "human nature is always and everywhere the same"; or of those legislators who, in ignorance of the fact that humanity is travelling in a definite and partially ascertainable direction, fondly hope to

turn it hither and thither by shrewdly-concocted acts of parliament. Nor, in maintaining this last position, did he ever fall into the opposite error—characteristic of superficial writers like Macaulay and Buckle—that individual genius and exertion is of little or no account in modifying the course of history. He did not forget that history is made by individual men, as much as a coral reef is made by individual polyps. Each contributes his infinitesimal share of effort; nor is the share of effort always so trifling. Considering the course of history merely as the resultant of the play of moral forces, is there not in a Julius Cæsar or a Themistokles as large a manifestation of the forces which go to make history as in thousands of common men? Nevertheless the fact remains that civilization runs in a definite path, that the sum-total of ideas and feelings dominant in the next generation will be the offspring of the sum-total of ideas and feelings dominant in this, and that only by understanding the general course of the *movement* of humanity can we hope to make our volitions count for much as an item in the resulting aggregate of effects.

Holding such views as these, Comte saw that the first aim of the sociological inquirer must be to ascertain the law of progress. And accordingly he set himself to work to perform this task, with the only instrument then at his command,—that of historical induction. I have already remarked upon his wonderful skill in the use of that instrument of research. I doubt if anyone has ever lived who had a keener sense of the significance of historic events, so far as such significance could be perceived without the aid of conceptions furnished by the sciences of organic development. The fifth volume of the "Philosophie Positive" is certainly a marvellous tableau of the progress of society. I know of no concrete presentation of universal history which can be compared with it. The general excellence of the conception is matched by the excellence of the execution even to the smallest details. And

amid the host of pregnant suggestions concerning Greek and Roman, and especially concerning mediæval, history, the great fact that there has been and is a determinate order of sequence in human affairs is placed quite beyond cavil on the highest plane of inductive demonstration.

To achieve so much as this was to show that a science of sociology is possible, and to prepare the way very thoroughly for the creation of such a science. But Comte professed to have done more than this. He regarded himself as the founder of sociology, and is so regarded by his disciples. It is part of our business to determine, if we can, whether the claim is a valid one; and in order to do this, we must examine the theorems which Comte propounded as the fundamental laws of progress.

These theorems are two in number,—the first relating to the intellectual, the second to what we may call the material, development of mankind. The first is an old acquaintance, being nothing else than the generalization that all human conceptions must pass through three stages—the theological, the metaphysical, and the positive. We have already (Part I. chapter vii.) examined this theory upon its own merits. Tried by a psychological analysis, we have found it to be only partially true. We saw it to be correct in so far as it asserts that the prevailing conception of the world becomes less and less anthropomorphic from age to age; but incorrect in so far that it asserts that in this deanthropomorphizing process there are three radically distinguishable stages, and also, in so far as it asserts that the process must end in Positivism. We saw that, although without doubt men began by seeing volition everywhere and must end by seeing an inscrutable Power everywhere, nevertheless the mental process has throughout been one and the same, and any appearance of definite stages can be only superficial. Nevertheless, between the primeval savage who prays to his fetish and the modern philosopher who recognizes that he must shape his

conduct according to invariable laws or pay the penalty in some form of inevitable suffering, the difference in mental attitude is so vast that we may well have a distinction in terms to correspond to it. It is for this reason that I have frequently contrasted Anthropomorphism and Cosmism as the initial and final terms of a continuous progression. This, however, is not the Comtean doctrine. Again, metaphysics, as Comte understands it, being merely imperfect scientific inquiry conducted by the aid of the subjective method bequeathed by anthropomorphism, cannot be regarded as the peculiar possession of any particular stage.

But while Comte's theorem, in spite of these radical defects, contains a germ of truth and has been found to be eminently useful as a formula for intellectual development, I cannot but be surprised that Comte should have regarded it as the fundamental law of social progress, and still more that such able writers as Mr. Mill and Mr. Lewes should at the present day be found countenancing such an opinion. Does this "law" explain how it was that Greek civilization prematurely failed? Does it throw any light upon the causal connection between Roman universal dominion and the Christian sentiment of the brotherhood of men? Does it recognize the distinction between the growth of a community in size and its growth in structure, or hint to us that the differences between Chinese and European civilization may be summed up in the statement that China is only a stupendous tribal community, while Romanized Europe is virtually a federation of exceedingly heterogeneous national aggregates? And while, as we shall presently see, it unconsciously recognizes that intellectual development is a continous process of adaptation, does it say anything about that slow process of emotional change by which the more harmonious co-operation of societies and the more perfect freedom of individuals are alike rendered possible? Indeed it says nothing about any of these things; and I must think

that these are very extensive lacunæ in a theorem which professes to be the fundamental law of social progress.

But this formula, as it stands, is not the whole of Comte's fundamental law of history. With the advance from theological, through metaphysical, to positive conceptions of the world, Comte couples an advance from military to industrial life, through an ill-defined intermediate stage—inserted, doubtless, to complete the threefold parallelism—which he calls the "legal" stage. Thoroughly to explain what he means by this "legal" stage of society, would require more detail than I can here well indulge in. We must be content with observing that he means to designate that epoch, which indeed we have not yet left behind us, in which parliamentary legislation is thought competent to renovate society artificially,—in which it is supposed that legislatures can make men rich by giving them paper-money, intellectual by patronizing literature, temperate by closing dram-shops. As this phase of opinion was very conspicuous in the eighteenth century, coupled with metaphysical systems of political ethics deduced from revolutionary theories of the "inherent rights of man," Comte links this whole set of doctrines together, and makes a so-called metaphysico-legal stage in social progress. But I cannot think this a happy generalization. This "legal" stage is, at the best, a phase of intellectual development, and to introduce it into the midst of a purely social progress from military to industrial life, seems too much like committing the logical fallacy known as cross-division. Omitting this stage, then, and reducing Comte's double formula to its lowest terms,—the only ones, I think, upon which he himself would invariably have insisted,—we have the following, as the Comtean law of progress:—

The progress of society is a gradual change from anthropomorphic to positive conceptions of the world, and from military to industrial modes of life; and the latter kind of change is determined by the former.

Such is the form of statement most favourable for Comte, and at the same time I believe it to be the one which best represents his permanent opinion. We shall presently see that the generalization of the change from military to industrial modes of life is one of great value, and it is to the thorough elaboration of it that much of the merit of Comte's social philosophy is due. But I must first call attention to the fatal defect in the above formula, the defect which destroys its claim to be regarded as the law of progress. That fatal defect is its total omission of moral feeling as a factor in social evolution. Though he is far from committing Mr. Buckle's absurdity of denying that there has been any improvement in moral feeling, Comte nevertheless falls into substantially the same error with Mr. Buckle, in attempting to explain all social progress as due simply to a progressive alteration of opinion. The error is one which seems to be shared by two other eminent writers,—Mr. Mill and Mr. Lewes. Here are the statements of the four: Mr. Mill says, "We are justified in concluding that the order of human progression in all respects will mainly depend on the order of progression in the intellectual convictions of mankind." [1] Mr. Lewes says, somewhat more vaguely, "The evolutions of Humanity correspond with the evolutions of Thought." [2] Mr. Buckle says, "The progress of mankind depends on the success with which the laws of phenomena are investigated, and on the extent to which a knowledge of those laws is diffused." [3] Comte says, "It is not to the readers of this work that I think it necessary to prove that ideas govern the world, and that the social mechanism reposes ultimately upon opinions." [4]

Now it is not so much because of what these propositions assert as because of what they omit, that they must be pro-

[1] *System of Logic*, 4th edit., vol. ii. p. 517.
[2] *Philosophy of the Sciences*, p. 23.
[3] *History of Civilization*, vol. ii. p. 1.
[4] *Philosophie Positive*, tom. i. p. 48.

nounced unsatisfactory and misleading. It is beyond question that the progress of mankind does depend upon the progressive conformity of the order of their conceptions to the order of phenomena; but, after the inquiry contained in the preceding chapter, I believe no further proof is necessary to convince us that the progress of mankind also depends upon the progressive conformity of their desires to the requirements arising from their aggregation in communities. If civilization is a process of intellectual adaptation, it is also a process of moral adaptation; and the latter I believe to be the more fundamental of the two. The case is well stated by Mr. Spencer, in the following passage: "Ideas do not govern the world; the world is governed by feelings, to which ideas serve only as guides. The social mechanism does not rest finally upon opinions; but almost wholly upon character. . . . . All social phenomena are produced by the totality of human emotions and beliefs: of which the emotions are mainly predetermined, while the beliefs are mainly post-determined. Men's desires are chiefly inherited; but their beliefs are chiefly acquired, and depend on surrounding conditions; and the most important surrounding conditions depend on the social state which the prevalent desires have produced. The social state at any time existing is the resultant of all the ambitions, self-interests, fears, reverences, indignations, sympathies, etc., of ancestral citizens and existing citizens. The ideas current in this social state must on the average be congruous with the feelings of citizens; and therefore, on the average, with the social state these feelings have produced. Ideas wholly foreign to this social state cannot be evolved, and, if introduced from without, cannot get accepted—or, if accepted, die out when the temporary phase of feeling which caused their acceptance ends." This statement, I may observe in passing, is well illustrated by the abortive attempts of missionaries to civilize the lower races of mankind by converting them to Christi-

anity. Though they sometimes succeed in procuring temporary verbal acceptance for Christian ideas, they almost always fail in effecting a genesis of Christian feeling, and such civilization as they are able to produce is apt to be both superficial and transient. This is simply because civilization is not a mere process of external acquirement, but is a process of slow adaptation or breeding, which requires many generations to effect a permanent modification of character. The Fiji, whose language contains no words expressive of the higher emotions or the more exalted principles of action, cannot be made into a Christian. You may cover him with a very little of the external varnish of civilization; you may astonish him into accepting a few formulas, to him quite unintelligible, concerning the relations of man to his Creator; but, after all, he remains a savage still, in feelings and in habits of thought, bloodthirsty, treacherous and superstitious, with a keen appetite for human flesh. Or suppose you could resuscitate a mediæval baron—one of those innumerable freebooters who lived entrenched in the romantic castles of the Rhine and levied blackmail on every luckless wayfarer—suppose you could resuscitate such a man, and were to endeavour to expound to him in the simplest language a few of the most self-evident modern axioms concerning political rights and the interdependence of human interests: would he understand you? By no means. So vast would be the difference in mental habit, that in all probability he could not even argue with you. "Hence"—to continue with Mr. Spencer—"though advanced ideas when once established act upon society and aid its further advance; yet the establishment of such ideas depends on the fitness of the society for receiving them. Practically, the popular character and the social state determine what ideas shall be current; instead of the current ideas determining the social state and the character. The modification of men's moral natures, caused by the

continuous discipline of social life, is therefore the chief proximate cause of social progress."

It is worthy of note that Comte, in his later period, comes partly around to this very point of view. At the beginning of the "Politique Positive," we find him announcing that the increasing tendency in the altruistic impulses to prevail over the egoistic impulses is the best measure by which to judge of the progress of society.[1] Yet the unsteadiness with which he grasped this principle is revealed by the somewhat misty statement, a few pages further on, that "the co-ordination of human nature as a whole depends ultimately upon the coordination of intellectual conceptions." A similar fluctuation in opinion may be noticed in Mr. Buckle; and it was indeed hardly possible for the function of moral feeling as a factor of progress to be thoroughly understood by writers unacquainted with the laws of adaptation upon which the scientific interpretation of that function is based. But whatever Comte's latest opinions may have been, since he never formulated any law to include the action of moral feeling as a factor of progress, his claims to be regarded as the founder of sociology must rest entirely upon his theory of progress as announced and elaborately illustrated in the "Philosophie Positive."

That theory, as we now see, is much too incomplete to serve as the foundation for a scientific study of history. Civilization cannot be summed up in the correct formula that men's occupations begin by being military and end by being industrial, or in the incorrect formula that men's conceptions of the world begin by being anthropomorphic and end by being positive; nor is it true that the former change is determined by the latter. We need to add the formula that men's feelings begin by being almost purely egoistic and must end by being altruistic to a considerably greater extent than will suffice to prevent individual interests from clashing.

[1] *Politique Positive*, tom. i. p. 16.

And even with all three formulas before us, we need something more before we can say that we have obtained the Law of Progress. These formulas are historical generalizations of great value; but as thus announced, they are too isolated with respect to each other. The progress of society is not moral progress, or intellectual progress, or material progress; but it is the combination of all the three. Our three formulas, therefore, must be integrated in a single formula. And this is done, and satisfactorily done, when it is shown that they are all involved in that law of adaptation or adjustment which underlies sociology, as well as psychology and biology.

That the progress from egoism to altruism is involved in that fundamental law, was proved in the preceding chapter, and has been illustrated throughout the whole of this discussion. But the law of adaptation equally involves the progress from Anthropomorphism, not to Positivism, but to Cosmism, as a necessary corollary. For what does that progress depend upon? What is the underlying process of which it is the necessary symptom and result? Why is it that men begin by investing the unknown causes of phenomena with quasi-human attributes and end by recognizing a single Cause which is inscrutable? In treating of deanthropomorphization (Part I. chap. vii.) we examined this point. We perceived the primitive anthropomorphism to be a corollary from the relativity of all knowledge. We saw that, to interpret phenomena at all, men must interpret them in terms of their own consciousness. We saw that before the dawn of science, when events seemed isolated and capricious, the phenomenon itself was by a natural inference—which only the progress of science has taught us to correct—endowed with a quasi-human personality. We traced the manner in which, as phenomena become generalized in wider and wider groups, the causes of phenomena become conceived as more and more abstract, and become stripped by slow degrees of their anthropomorphic vestments. Until

finally, when generalization has proceeded to such an extent as to give us a single grand science of Cosmology, dealing with the Universe as an integral whole, there comes to be recognized a single Cause of phenomena, which, as being infinite, cannot be in any anthropomorphic sense personal, and which, as being absolute, must be inscrutable.

Thus we see that Comte's formula is not fundamental, even as a formula for intellectual development. The process of deanthropomorphization is not the fundamental fact. The continuous organization of knowledge and generalization of phenomena is the fundamental fact, of which the continuous deanthropomorphization is the necessary symptom and result. Now in Part I. chap. ii., we traced the outlines of this continuous organization of knowledge; and we found that the advance from incomplete to complete knowledge consists in the continuous establishment of groups of notions which are ever more coherent within themselves, while they are ever more clearly demarcated from one another. Now what is all this but a continuous process of differentiation and integration? When we say that from first to last, from the simplest cognitions of infancy to the widest generalizations of science, we cognize phenomena invariably through difference and likeness, we mean that we are continually differentiating notions answering to unlike phenomena and continually integrating notions answering to like phenomena. Or, to express the same thing in other words, we are continually establishing relations of likeness and unlikeness among our conceptions, that in some way or other definitely correspond to relations of likeness and unlikeness among phenomena. Thus our intellectual progress is at bottom a process of adaptation. And, when treating of the Test of Truth (Part I. chap. iii.), it was shown that Truth, the goal of intellectual progress, is nothing else than the complete adaptation of the order of conceptions to the order of phenomena,—the establishment of inner relations

that are in equilibrium with outer relations. Thus we obtain a veritable law of intellectual progress; whereas to say that men's conceptions pass from Anthropomorphism to Positivism is merely to enunciate an empirical generalization, which, besides being empirical, is also radically imperfect.

The gradual change from a military to an industrial life must also seek its rational explanation in the law of progress as above formulated. The diminution of warfare and the concomitant increase of devotion to industrial pursuits are entailed by the growth of communities in size and structure. Among the primitive tribal societies there is no industrial life save that implied in hunting and fishing, and at a somewhat later date in the rearing of domestic animals. Settled agricultural pursuits require a greater power of continuous application and a more developed ability to subordinate present enjoyment to the anticipation of future needs than is to be found in the primitive savage. It is only the mental habit produced by long-continued social discipline which enables us to work to-day that we may enjoy the fruits of our labour at a distant period. The primeval tribe wanders from spot to spot, seeking ever a better hunting-ground or richer pasturage, leading a predatory life which differs in little save in its family organization from that led by the lower animals. In this stage of society constant warfare is inevitable, since each tribe must fight or be crushed out of existence by neighbouring tribes. Over a large part of the earth's surface, such has been the monotonous career of savage man from the earliest times until the present day. Such appears to have been, in its main features, the ancient history of our own country before its conquest by Europeans, as it is admirably delineated in the writings of that acute observer Mr. Parkman.

The exigencies of warfare, however, of themselves facilitate that integration of tribal communities which we have seen to be the indispensable condition of progress. A con-

siderable step toward civilization is taken when tribes begin to aggregate for mutual defence over a wide tract of country. When America was discovered, an aggregation of this sort had apparently begun to be formed among the Iroquois; and such was the highest organization reached by the ancient Turanian tribes of Central Asia. A far more important step is taken when warfare ceases to be purely destructive and becomes acquisitive; or, in other words, when the victors, instead of massacreing the vanquished, begin to make slaves of them. By this step agricultural industry is fairly brought into existence, and the tribal confederacy becomes fixed in location and enabled to increase indefinitely in size at the expense of the less highly organized communities in the neighbourhood. Under these conditions the tribal confederacy may grow until it takes on the semblance of an "aggregate of the third order," as in China,[1] or in ancient Egypt, Assyria, Media, Lydia, and Persia. I am expressing something more than an analogy—I am describing a real homology as far as concerns the process of development—when I say that these communities simulated modern European nations much in the same way that a tree-fern of the carboniferous period simulated the exogenous trees of the present time. The vast growth and the considerable civilization obtained by such communities wererendered possible only through the institution of industrial slavery in place of the primeval indiscriminate slaughter of captives. Only through enforced labour did the continuous culture of the soil and the consequent stability of society become possible;

[1] "In every respect the Chinese constitution of society may be regarded as a gigantic amplification of the constitution of the family. The family is no doubt the constituent element of which all societies are composed; just as, in the body, all tissues, nervous or muscular, are generated from the primitive cellular tissue; but whereas in other societies we find differentiation into classes and institutions which have no direct analogue in the family, in China we find far less of this, far more of adherence to the primitive social tissue, to the patriarchal type. On this type the village and the empire are alike moulded." Bridges, in *Essays on International Polity*, p. 401.

a point which Comte clearly saw, and has brilliantly illustrated.

Thus we see how the exigencies of self-protection entailed by the primitive state of universal warfare furnished of themselves the conditions for the rise of industry. We need not trace in detail the slow growth of the industrial spirit at the expense of the military spirit in the ancient civic communities, in the ancient and mediæval Empire, and in modern times. That has been done, with a masterly hand, by Comte. We may only note briefly how industry—the offspring of slavery, itself the offspring of warfare—has all along, by aiding the differentiation and integration of society, been draining the vitality out of its primeval parent. Let us note, then, that the kind of differentiation, known as "division of labour," by rendering the various portions of the community more and more dependent on each other, renders a state of warfare ever less easy to sustain, and therefore continually, though slowly, diminishes the frequency and shortens the continuance of wars. The statement that in early times a community is, on the whole, better able to endure protracted warfare than in later times, may be illustrated by a comparison between the Punic Wars of Rome and the War of Secession in our own country. The horrible destruction of life and property occasioned by the first and second Punic wars is minutely described in Mommsen's "Roman History." The first of these desperate struggles lasted twenty-three years, during the five severest of which the census of Roman patricians was diminished by one-sixth of the whole number,—a fact terrible to contemplate when its full significance is realized. After twenty-three years of comparative quiet began the still more deadly struggle against Hannibal, which lasted seventeen years. During this war, the total loss of life in all the communities engaged—Italian, Spanish, Sicilian, and African—cannot be estimated at less than 600,000 persons actually slain; a loss which I believe

somewhat exceeds that of the Northern and Southern States in the American war. But to make a fair comparison, we must include the circumstance that the population of these ancient communities was not more than one-sixth as great as the population of the United States; and that in ancient times the normal rate of increase of population was very much slower than in such a community as ours. The second Punic war was, therefore, relatively as murderous as our civil war would have been had it continued until between three and four million lives were destroyed. And if we would appreciate the direct damage to industry which it entailed, we have a sufficient datum in the fact that during those seventeen years more than four hundred flourishing towns and villages in Italy alone were blotted out of existence.[1]

Now opinions may differ as to the possibility of our carrying on for seventeen years a war which should drain our resources as the Hannibalic war drained the resources of Italy. Probably no country could so well sustain such a trial as the United States, owing to the favourableness of our social conditions for exceedingly rapid growth in wealth and population. Nevertheless, even omitting foreign interference from the account, I do not believe the thing would be possible. I believe it perfectly safe to assert that a war like the one we have lately passed through would, if prolonged to seventeen years, entail social disintegration throughout the community. Yet the absolute military power of the United States is incomparably greater than that of ancient Rome: wherein, then, lies the difference?

The explanation will be found, and the particular conclusion reinforced, when we consider the enormous increase of heterogeneity and interdependence in the modern as contrasted with the ancient community. In ancient Italy there was but little division of labour: it required but a few simple

[1] Mommsen, *Römische Geschichte*, tom. i. p. 671; see also p. 536.

occupations to supply the wants of the whole community. In the United States considered as a whole, the division of labour is perhaps not quite so extreme as in western Europe, owing to the sparseness of population and the purely agricultural activity of large sections of the country: still, the industrial differentiation is very great, and to supply the wants of each portion of the community a vast number of mutually dependent and highly complicated occupations is indispensably necessary. Obviously the heterogeneous community cannot so well bear the abstraction of units from its mutually dependent parts, as the homogeneous community could bear the abstraction of units from its relatively independent and self-sufficing parts. The difference is much the same as the difference between cutting off portions of a worm and cutting off portions of a vertebrate animal. You may take one of the lower worms and slice away at it for some time without destroying it, but in the case of the vertebrate a comparatively small loss of parts entails destruction. In society the principle is the same. The Romans could lose army after army, while the few who remained at home could carry on all the agricultural and commercial operations necessary to the maintenance of the community. There were no great organized industries, manufacturing or commercial, so linked together that the destruction of any one might cause general financial disaster. But in any large modern community industry has become so heterogeneous that it is difficult for one part to take on the functions of another part, and so completely integrated that a sudden and considerable withdrawal of men from the ordinary pursuits of life can hardly take place without causing widespread suffering. And the contrast is made still greater by the industrial federation of modern communities as compared with the industrial isolation of ancient states. Though the time has perhaps never been, since Mediterranean civilization began, when a war could

continue very long in one community without tending to set up disturbance in some other, yet this interaction of different states was far less conspicuous in ancient than it is in modern times. The Hannibalic war might go on for seventeen years, and Athens or Alexandria not be much the worse off for it. But before the war of secession had continued twelve months, the consequent suffering in Lancashire was manifesting itself in riots, and England for a time seemed willing at all hazards to interfere and check the contest.

This single example—out of hundreds that might be taken—must suffice to illustrate the way in which the ever-increasing interdependence of human interests, itself both the cause and the effect of industrial progress, is ever making warfare less and less endurable. To this it must be added that both moral and intellectual factors contribute to bring about the general result. As human interests in various parts of the world become more and more inextricably wrought together, and as communities which lie apart from each other come ever into closer contact, the ancient antagonisms of sentiment between them slowly disappear, and international friendship grows at the expense of the old hostility or distrust. Thus the moral adaptation due to long-continued social discipline diminishes the warlike feelings and strengthens the feelings which maintain an industrial *régime;* while on the other hand, intellectual adaptation, ever adding new complication to industry, arrays the opinion of society more and more decidedly against war, as against an intolerable source of disturbance. Besides which, the very heterogeneity of the military art, the increasing complication both of the implements and of the methods of warfare, due to scientific and industrial progress, renders war ever more costly, and makes the community less willing to engage in it. And these cooperating processes must go on until—probably at no very distant period—warfare shall have become extinct in all the civilized portions of the globe.

In so far as the present chapter has dealt with the claims of Comte to be regarded as the founder of Sociology, I believe it is sufficiently proved that these claims cannot be sustained, though in many ways he did more than anyone else to prepare the way for such an achievement. If a man can ever be properly said to create or found a science, it is only when he discovers some fundamental principle which underlies the phenomena with which the science has to deal, and which thus serves to organize into a coherent ratiocinative body of knowledge that which has hitherto been an incoherent empirical body of knowledge. It was in this way that Newton may be said to have created a science of celestial dynamics, and that Bichat is sometimes, and more loosely, said to have been the founder of modern biology. In no such sense can Comte be said to have created sociology. Standing on the vantage-ground of contemporary science, which enables us to discern in outline the law of progress, we can see not only that Comte was far from detecting that law, but that, with the limited appliances at his command, he could not have been expected to discover it. Nevertheless his contributions to sociology were exceedingly brilliant and valuable, and he did perhaps all that the greatest thinker could have done forty years ago. He arrived at a double generalization of the phenomena of intellectual and material progress, as wide as could then be reached by unaided historical induction; and he verified this double generalization by an elaborate survey of ancient and modern history, which, even had he written nothing else, would alone suffice to make his name immortal. It entitles him, I think, to be ranked first among those sociologists who have proceeded solely on the historical method,—on a somewhat higher plane, perhaps, than Vico or Montesquieu, Turgot or Condorcet. That generalization, in both its branches, and in so far as it is correct, we have here seen to be a corollary from the fundamental law of social evolution obtained in the pre-

ceding chapter. We have seen that the continuous adaptation, both moral and intellectual, of the community to its environment, involves, as necessary concomitants, both the progressive deanthropomorphization of men's conceptions of Cause, and the gradual change from military to industrial habits of life. And the harmony between the results thus obtained by pursuing two wholly independent lines of inquiry, adds fresh support both to the fundamental law and to its historic corollaries. In the very act of proving that Comte did not achieve the whole, we do but place what he did achieve upon a deeper and firmer basis.

CHAPTER XX.

CONDITIONS OF PROGRESS.

AT the beginning of the chapter on the Evolution of Society we remarked upon the error of those metaphysical writers who have gone so far as to ascribe progressiveness to an occult tendency inherent in human nature. It need not take a very long survey of human societies, past and present, to assure us that beyond a certain point stagnation has been the rule and progress the exception. Over a large part of the earth's surface the slow progress painfully achieved during thousands of prehistoric ages has stopped short with the savage state, as exemplified by those African, Polynesian, and American tribes which can neither work out a civilization for themselves, nor appropriate the civilization of higher races with whom they are brought into contact. Half the human race, having surmounted savagery, have been arrested in an immobile type of civilization, as in China, in ancient Egypt, and in the East generally. It is only in the Aryan and some of the Semitic races, together with the Hungarians and other Finnic tribes subjected to Aryan influences, that we can find evidences of a persistent tendency to progress. And that there is no inherent race-tendency at work in this is shown by the fact that some of the Aryans, as the Hindus and Persians, are among the most unprogressive of men. It

becomes apparent, therefore, that the progress of the European Aryans, and of such other races as have from time to time arisen from an immobile condition, can have been due only to a concurrence of favourable circumstances. In order to complete our outline-sketch of the Evolution of Society, we must consider some of these circumstances, and thus, so far as possible, redeem the promise which was implied at the beginning of the discussion. By pointing out some of the conditions essential to progress in civilization, we must endeavour to throw a glimmer of light upon the fact that so small a portion of the human race has attained to permanent progressiveness. A faint glimmer of enlightenment is indeed the most we can hope for, and even this will perhaps be thought to have been obtained by a mere restatement of the problem in other words. Nevertheless, in other departments of study as well as in algebra, much good is often done by reducing a problem from one form of expression to another. For if such a reduction ends in classifying the problem, the first and most important step is taken toward a solution. Let us deal in this way with the problem before us, which is one of the most complex and difficult that the history of the world presents.

It will be obvious to everyone that there is a close kinship between this question in sociology and the biological question why certain species remain unchanged through countless ages. The latter fact has been urged as an obstacle in the way of the development theory, and has been felt to be such by Dr. Bastian, who has endeavoured to dispose of it by an extraordinary application of his favourite theories of archebiosis and heterogenesis.[1] But indeed those who urge this fact as an obstacle, and those who seek to explain it away, show that they have not thoroughly comprehended the Doctrine of Evolution. For example, it is not implied in the general law of evolution, as above expounded in

[1] Bastian, *Beginnings of Life*, vol. ii. pp. 584—640.

Chapter IV., that wherever the integration of matter and concomitant dissipation of motion are going on, there must always ensue a change from indefinite uniformity to definite multiformity of structure. As has already been shown, such a change can be expected to take place only when a number of specified circumstances concur in forwarding it. So it is one of the peculiar merits of Mr. Darwin's theory of natural selection, that it does not allege an unceasing or ubiquitous alteration of animal and vegetal forms, but includes, in a general way, all cases of persistence of type, as well as all cases of progress or retrogression. One and the same general theory accounts for the fact that, while some species thrive in the struggle for life and acquire new capacities, others dwindle in numbers or deteriorate in structure, while others again maintain themselves unchanged throughout immense periods. Throughout all these cases, the general truth is easily discerned that the total result will depend upon a very complex combination of circumstances: the difficulty is in applying the general truth to the special cases that arise. Probably no naturalist could point out all the specific circumstances which have caused any one race of animals to prevail over another in the struggle for life. Such a task would probably demand a more vast and minute knowledge of the details of the organic world than it is as yet possible for the most unremitting industry, inspired by the highest genius, to acquire. Yet no one doubts the general principle that it is natural selection which determines, not only which races shall prevail, but also which races shall vary and which shall remain unmodified. So in dealing with human societies, in the primitive era with which the present discussion is chiefly concerned, the historic data are insufficient to enable us to ascertain the precise circumstances to which the prevalence and the improvability of certain races are to be attributed. Nevertheless we can here, too, point out sundry general

principles in accordance with which natural selection has determined the course of events.

In considering the action of natural selection upon the human race, we must first note how that action is, in some respects, materially modified by social conditions. Among inferior animals, even those which are gregarious, as the ruminants and sundry smaller carnivora, the preservation of any individual requires his almost complete adaptation to surrounding circumstances. There is so little division of labour, and consequently so little mutual assistance, that all must be capable who would survive. With the earliest manifestations of true sociality this state of things must be somewhat altered. Even in the rudest actual or imaginable society there is some division of labour, and some mutual assistance. Those who are less swift for hunting or less strong for fighting may at least perform services for the hunters and warriors, and in return will be more or less efficiently fed and protected; so that those who fall below the average capability of the race are no longer sure to be prematurely cut off, and thus the agency of natural selection in keeping up a nearly uniform standard of fitness is to some extent checked. In the highly complex societies which we call civilized, division of labour and co-operation have done much to obscure the effects of this agency. From the cooperation which goes on to a greater or less extent in all societies, and from the enormous heterogeneity of man's psychical organization, it follows that there are innumerable circumstances which may enable individual men to survive, in spite of their falling considerably short of the normal standard of the community and the age to which they belong. This fact, as will hereafter appear, renders it possible for man to have an ideal standard of excellence or successfulness in life, and is closely associated with the genesis of the ethical feelings of approval and disapproval.

But while natural selection among individuals grows some-

what less rigorous, its effects upon rival or antagonist societies are in nowise diminished in their beneficent severity. The attributes which tend to make a society strong and durable with reference to surrounding societies, are the attributes which natural selection will chiefly preserve. As Mr. Wallace has pointed out: "Capacity for acting in concert for protection, and for the acquisition of food and shelter; sympathy, which leads all in turn to assist each other; the sense of right, which checks depredations upon our fellows; . . . self-restraint in present appetites; and that intelligent foresight which prepares for the future, are all qualities that from their earliest appearance must have been for the benefit of each community, and would therefore have become the subjects of natural selection. Tribes in which such mental and moral qualities were predominant, would have an advantage in the struggle for existence over other tribes in which they were less developed, and would live and maintain their numbers, while the others would decrease and finally succumb." [1]

The most conspicuous result of this unceasing operation of natural selection upon rival communities, has been the continuous increase of the aggregate military strength of the human race, and the more and more complete segregation of this military strength into those portions of the race which are most civilized. As Mr. Bagehot has ably shown,[2] however broken or discontinuous the progressive career of the European family of nations may seem to have been in other respects, there can hardly be a doubt that the increase of their aggregate military force has been uninterrupted. There can hardly be a doubt that the total fighting power of the Mediterranean communities was greater

[1] Wallace, *Natural Selection*, p. 312.

[2] See his *Physics and Politics*, London, 1872,—a little book so excellent both in thought and in expression that one cannot but wish there were much more of it.

under Trajan than in the time of Polybios; that the sum of Latin and Teutonic strength in the days of Charles Martel was greater than in the days of Marcus Aurelius; that the united Europe of Pope Gregory VII. could have vanquished the united Europe of Charles the Great, but would have been no match for the united Europe of Philip, Elizabeth, and Henry; or that the existing generation of Aryans in Europe and America represents a greater quantity of military power than any previous generation. This result is partly due to the mere increase of the civilized communities in size and industrial complexity, and partly to the integration, over wider and wider areas, of communities previously isolated. But while there have been periods of intermittence in the operation of these social and political circumstances, as during the Teutonic reconstruction of the Roman Empire, the increase in total fighting power appears to have gone on without intermittence, showing that it has been in great degree due to a cause unremitting in its operation. That cause has been natural selection. In the earlier and ruder times it has operated through the *actual* conquest of the weaker tribes, provinces, or cities, by the stronger. In later and more refined ages, the quieter but equally stringent competition of nation with nation, involving the *possible* conquest or relative humiliation of one by another, has caused a considerable proportion of the ever-accumulating intellectual and industrial acquirements of each nation to be expended (or, as Mr. Bagehot more happily says, "invested") in an increase of military strength.

From the cooperation of these circumstances the aggregate physical strength of civilized society has increased so enormously that in comparison with the military events of our time, the military events of antiquity seem like mere child's play, if we look at physical dimensions alone, and not at world-historic significance. Ignoring the latter point of view, Mr. Robert Lowe has maintained that the battle of Marathon

was an event of less importance than "a good colliery accident," because forsooth only 192 lives were lost on the side of the Greeks![1] To him, however, who has acquired the habit of looking at European history as one connected whole, it will not seem extravagant to say that contemporary English civilization is indebted to the victory of Marathon in a far higher degree than to the victories of Crecy or Agincourt, or even of Waterloo. The immense relative importance of some of these ancient military events of small dimensions, is due to the fact that military strength was not then concentrated in the most highly civilized communities, as it is in modern times. In antiquity there was a real danger that the nascent civilization of higher type might be extinguished by the long-established civilization of far lower type, or even by barbarism, through mere disparity of numbers. We do not know how often in prehistoric times some little gleam of civilization may have been put out by an overwhelming wave of barbarism, though by reason of the great military superiority which even a little civilization gives, such occurrences are likely to have been on the whole exceptional. This great superiority is well exemplified in the ease with which the Greeks defeated ten times their own number of Asiatics at Marathon, and afterwards at Kynaxa. Nevertheless it cannot be questioned that the invasions of B.C. 490 and 480 were fraught with serious danger to Grecian independence, and if Datis or Mardonios had happened to possess the military talent of Cyrus or of Timour, the danger would have been alarming indeed. Now if little Greece had thus been swallowed up by giant Persia, and the nascent political and intellectual freedom extinguished in Athens as it was in the Ionic cities of Asia Minor, the entire future history of Macedonia, of Rome, and of Europe, would have been altered in a way that is not pleasant to contemplate. When we reflect upon the enormous place in human history

[1] See Freeman, *Comparative Politics*, p. 498.

which is filled by the products of Athenian intellectual activity during the two centuries succeeding the victory of Marathon; when we remember that the foundations of philosophy, of exact science, of æsthetic art in all its branches, of historic and literary criticism, and of free political discussion, were then and there for ever securely laid; when we consider the widely ramifying influences, now obvious and now more subtle, of all this intense productivity upon Roman ethics and jurisprudence, upon the genesis of Christianity, upon the lesser Renaissance of the thirteenth century, and the greater Renaissance of the fifteenth; when we see how inseparably the life of Athens runs as a woof through the entire web of European life down to our own times;—when we come to realize all this, we shall begin to realize how frightful was the danger from which we were rescued at Marathon and at Salamis.

Probably at no subsequent time has European civilization been in a position of such imminent peril. In the life-and-death struggle between Rome and Carthage, the military superiority belonged so decidedly to the more highly-evolved community that even the unrivalled genius of Hannibal was powerless to turn the scale.[1] One of the most conspicuous features in Roman history, from the conquest of Spain by Scipio to the conquest of the Saxons by Charles the Great, was the continual taming of the brute force of barbarism, and the enlisting it on the side of civilization. In the earlier times there seems to have been real danger in the invasions of Brennus and of the Cimbri, and perhaps in that of Ariovistus. But with the conquest of Gaul and the more subtle process of Romanization which the Teutons underwent, the danger from these sources disappeared, until, when the great struggle with outer barbarism came in the fifth century, we see the Empire saved on a Gaulish field by the prowess of the West-Goth. The battle of Châlons seems

[1] See Arnold, *History of Rome*, vol. iii. p. 63.

to me to have been the last of the great fights in which the further continuance of European civilization was really imperilled. Though the victory of Attila could hardly have entailed the rebarbarizing of the whole Empire, it might well have caused such a temporary "solution of continuity" between ancient and modern history as the old historians supposed to have been wrought a few years later by the comparatively insignificant intrigues of Odoacer. Many hard-working years might have been needed to recover the ground thus lost. But in passing to the eighth century, I think we may well doubt the soundness of Gibbon's suggestion that the victory of Abderahman at Tours might have led to the Mohammedanization of Europe; for while one great defeat forced the Arab to retire behind the Pyrenees, on the other hand the complete overthrow of the Frankish power would probably have required many battles as fierce as this one. This increased toughness of civilization is still more plainly seen five centuries later, when the overwhelming victory of the Mongols at Liegnitz produced no effect at all beyond a temporary scare. It was not that the invasion under Batu was intrinsically less formidable than the invasion of Attila, but that the physical strength of civilized Europe had been growing throughout the long interval, so that the blow which might once have proved fatal was no longer dangerous. Since the fruitless sieges of Vienna by the Turks, the mere dread of barbaric or semi-barbaric invasion has passed away for ever. Tribally-organized barbarism is henceforth out of the lists entirely, and even the civilization of lower type has ceased to compete, in a military way, with the civilization of higher type.

Thus we see how natural selection, facilitating and co-operating with the integration of the more civilized communities and their increase in size and complexity, has gradually removed one of the dangers to which the earlier civilizations were exposed, and has concentrated the power of making

war on a grand scale into the hands of those communities in which predatory activity is at the minimum and industrial activity at the maximum. We are thus again reminded of the curiously cooperating processes, partially illustrated in the preceding chapter, through which warfare or destructive competition, once ubiquitous, is becoming evanescent, and giving place to a competition that is industrial or productive in character. But what now more especially concerns us is to look back to the earlier stages of the struggle for life between communities, and to observe some of the circumstances which must have tended to make some communities prevail over others.

The illustrations just cited show well enough the tendency of the higher type of civilization to prevail, in the long run, over the lower type. They are illustrations of the military advantages of civilization. And Mr. Bagehot has incidentally shown how thoroughly this fact disposes of the old-fashioned doctrine that modern savages are the degraded descendants of civilized ancestors. It was formerly assumed that, instead of mankind having arisen out of primeval savagery, modern savages have fallen from a primeval state of civilization, having lost the arts, the morality, and the intelligence which they once possessed; and of late years some such thesis as this has been overtly maintained by the Duke of Argyll. Such a falling off, upon any extensive scale, is in every way incompatible with the principle of natural selection. Take, for example, the ability to anticipate future contingencies,—to abstain to-day that we may enjoy to-morrow. In the next chapter it will be shown that this is the most prominent symptom of the deepest of all the intellectual differences between civilization and savagery. Now, obviously, the ability to postpone present to future enjoyment is, in a mere economic or military aspect, such an important acquisition to any race or group of men, that when once acquired it could never be lost. The race possessing

this capacity could by no possibility yield ground to the races lacking it, unless overwhelmed by sheer weight of vastly superior numbers,—a case which the hypothesis of a universal primitive civilization does not leave room for. Or take the ready belief in omens by which the life of the savage is so terribly hampered. Could a single tribe in old Australia have surmounted the necessity of searching for omens before undertaking any serious business, it would inevitably, says Mr. Bagehot, have subjugated all the other tribes on the continent. In like manner it is obvious that such implements as the bow and arrow and the iron swords or hatchets could never have given place to the boomerang and the knives and hatchets of stone or bronze; and the intellectual capacity implied in monotheism and the discovery of elementary geometry could never have been conquered out of existence by the intellectual capacity implied in fetishism and the inability to count above three or four. So, because the men who possess the attributes of civilization must necessarily prevail, in the long run, over the men who lack these attributes, it follows that there cannot have been, in prehistoric times, a general loss of the attributes, external and internal, of civilization.

Now one of the attributes which will most surely give to any group of men an advantage in the competition with neighbouring groups, is the presence of a powerful bond of union between its members. Our entire survey of social evolution shows that one of the most distinctive characteristics of civilized men is their capacity for acting in concert with one another over wider and wider areas. The next chapter will enable us more fully to understand that the acquirement of this capacity is simply a further prolonging of the extension of correspondences in time and space which has been shown to be a leading characteristic of psychical progress throughout the organic world. The growth of this capacity, during historic times, has been a complex result of

the increase of progressive communities, in size, in heterogeneity, and in reciprocity of intercourse. For this many-sided development has not only entailed a relative weakening of the more anti-social impulses and a complicated interlacing of the interests of communities and individuals, but it has also entailed a general widening and diversifying of intellectual experiences, enabling men to realize the desirableness of those remoter ends which are indirectly secured by concerted action over wide areas. Thus in a high state of civilization a large amount of concerted action is ensured by the operation of the ordinary incentives to individual activity, without the aid of extraordinary incentives especially embodied in governmental edicts, political, sacerdotal, or ceremonial. But in a primitive state of society it is quite otherwise. It is notorious that uncivilized men cannot be made to act in concert save under the stimulus of loyalty to a chief, or of reverence for some superstition, or of slavish obedience to time-honoured custom. Hence in early times those communities are most likely to prevail, in which loyalty, reverence, and obedience are most strongly developed. From a military point of view there are hardly any other advantages which can outweigh these. Rigidity in family-relationships is one instance in which these advantages are manifested. A community in which the *patria potestas* is thoroughly established must inevitably subjugate those rival communities in which kinship is reckoned through females only. The common-sense of the old historians perceived and insisted upon the fact that much of the marvellous success of the Roman commonwealth was traceable to strictness of family-discipline. In like manner, as Mr. Bagehot has suggested, we may discern the true social function performed by those dreadful religions of early times which so naturally awakened loathing and horror in such thinkers as Lucretius: they enforced, with tremendous sanctions, such lines of conduct as were prescribed by the necessities of the primitive community; they

rendered it easier to ensure concerted action among men by compelling all to act in conformity to some unchangeable rule.

In short, among numerous tribal groups of primitive men, those will prevail in the struggle for existence in which the lawless tendencies of individuals are most thoroughly subordinated by the yoke of tyrannical custom,—the only yoke which uncivilized men can be made to wear. Such communities will grow at the expense of tribes that are less law-abiding. It matters comparatively little, as Mr. Bagehot says, whether the tyrant custom be intrinsically good or bad: the great thing, at first, is to subject men's individualities to a system of common habits. Mr. Mill has complained, in his work on "Liberty" and elsewhere, that one of the characteristics of modern civilization is the disappearance of strongly-marked individualities, such as we find in mediæval and in ancient civilization. But surely he is quite mistaken in this,—and his mistake arises partly from neglect of the circumstance that in ancient and in feudal times the full manifestation of one powerful individuality was achieved only through the utter sinking of many weaker individualities, and partly from the fallacy of taking the unparalleled community of Athens as a type of ancient communities in general. Surely in no previous age has there been anything like so wide a scope for the manifestation of strongly-marked individuality of thought or character as in the present age. It would, indeed, be hardly too much to say that this is the first age in human history which has given us a realizing foretaste of the time when freedom of thought and freedom of action shall not only be acknowledged as a right but insisted upon as a duty for all men. But this is due to the fact that men's natures have, through long ages of social discipline, become in some degree adapted to the social state. This relatively free recognition of idiosyncrasies in thought or

demeanour shows that modern society can count upon an organic or instinctive conformity to law on the part of individuals, upon which ancient society could not count. In early times, freedom from the yoke of custom meant simple lawlessness; and against such disintegrating lawlessness all the most formidable sanctions which society could devise were brought to bear. Hence the feeling of corporate responsibility is universal among primitive societies. "Not only the mutilators of the Hermai, but all the Athenians—not only the violator of the rites of the *Bona Dea*, but all the Romans—are liable to the curse engendered; and so all through ancient history." In such a stage of mental development, the community as a whole is beset with perpetual anxiety concerning the words and deeds of its members; and it is to a great extent from this sense of corporate responsibility that persecution for heresy in opinion or eccentricity in behaviour is ultimately derived.

The inference from all these considerations is obvious. Tribes with the strongest sense of corporate responsibility, with the most rigid family-relationships, the most despotic yoke of custom, go on growing through long ages at the expense of rival tribes in which the means for securing concerted action over wide areas are less perfect. Age after age some competing tribes are exterminated or enslaved, while others are absorbed by the victorious tribe and assimilated to it; and thus age after age the bond of tyrannical custom becomes stronger and more rigid, while it extends over wider areas and constrains a larger number of people to uniformity of behaviour. Such a process will naturally result in the formation of a huge social "aggregate of the first order," as in Egypt, Assyria, China, Mexico, and Peru. The common characteristic of these civilizations of lower type is that their growth in size has been out of all proportion to their increase in structural heterogeneity. Though they may contain many cities, they contain nothing like the civic type

of social organization, as seen in Greece and Italy; and though they have taken on the semblance of nations, yet they lack the fundamental conception of true Nationality,—the union of individuals through community of interests, rather than through physical community of descent.[1] In all these half-civilized societies, we find that the primitive tribal or patriarchal mode of structure is simply expanded without being essentially altered. The family is still the unit of society, the sense of corporate responsibility is still powerful, individual careers are still determined by status and not by contract, originality in opinion or in demeanour is still prohibited by the most formidable legal or social penalties; the tyranny of custom, in short, is still paramount, and—to crown all—the three kinds of governmental agency, political, ecclesiastical, and ceremonial, are still concentrated in the person of the patriarchal ruler, who is at once king, chief-priest or vice-deity, and master of ceremonies.

Observe, now, the dilemma which seems to confront us. In the operation of natural selection upon primitive tribes, we seem to have found a satisfactory explanation of the growth of such social "aggregates of the first order" as China or old Mexico. But now, how are we going to get past this stage? How shall we account for the formation of social aggregates of a higher type? The problem now

[1] In antiquity the only conceivable bond of social union was community of descent, actual or fictitious. Even the conception of territorial proximity as a source of common action did not gain currency in Europe till towards the tenth century of the Christian era. Theodoric the East-Goth, whom the old historians called "King of Italy," would not have understood the meaning of the phrase. In those days a man could be king of a group of kindred people, without reference to locality, but such a thing as kingship of a geographical area was unintelligible. The modern nationality (of which the United States is perhaps the most perfect type) is founded upon the thorough subordination of the patriarchal theory of community in blood to the modern theory of community in interests. The so-called "doctrine of nationalities," about which so much sentimental nonsense has been written, ought rather to be called the "doctrine of races," since it is virtually a revival of the patriarchal theory. It may be truly said that, in spite of greater ethnic diversity, Switzerland, for example, is in many respects more completely a nationality than Spain.

before us is how to relax the tyranny of custom, and thus afford a chance for social reorganization, without entailing a retrogression toward primeval lawlessness. It is one of the puzzles of sociology that the very state of things which is pre-eminently useful in bringing men out of savagery is also likely to be pre-eminently in the way of their attaining to a persistently progressive civilization. "No one," says Mr. Bagehot, "will ever comprehend the arrested civilizations unless he sees the strict dilemma of early society. Either men had no law at all, and lived in confused tribes, hardly hanging together, or they had to obtain a fixed law by processes of incredible difficulty. Those who surmounted that difficulty soon destroyed all those that lay in their way who did not. And then they themselves were caught in their own yoke. The customary discipline, which could only be imposed on any early men by terrible sanctions, continued with those sanctions, and killed out of the whole society the propensities to variation which are the principle of progress."[1]

Mr. Bagehot shows that this problem has never been successfully solved except where a race, rendered organically law-abiding through some discipline of the foregoing kind, has been thrown into emulative conflict with other races similarly disciplined,—a condition which has been completely fulfilled only in the case of the migrating Aryans who settled Europe. But before we can extricate ourselves from our seeming dilemma, we need to point out, more distinctly than Mr. Bagehot has done, that in all probability none of the progressive Aryan races has ever passed through anything corresponding to the Chinese or Egyptian stage, and that when a community has once got into such a state of fixity, it is really questionable whether it can ever get out of it, unless under the direct tuition of other communities. It would at present be premature to speculate upon the results which

[1] *Physics and Politics*, p. 57.

are likely to flow from British dominion in Hindustan, or from the intrusion of European ideas into Japan and China. Looking to the past only, it is safe to say that when the "cake of custom" has become so firmly cemented, and on such a great scale, as in these primitively-organized communities, there is but little likelihood of its getting broken. The Oriental stage—if one may so call it—is not a stage through which progressive nations pass, but it is a stage in which further progress is impossible, save through the occurrence of some deep-reaching social revolution. The progressive races are just those which have in some way avoided this dilemma,—which have succeeded in securing concerted action among individuals without going so far as to kill out the tendency to individual variations. Historically we find no traces of primitive political despotism among the European Aryans. Alike among Greeks, Italians, Teutons, and Slaves, we find the elements of a free constitution at hand, and the "age of discussion" inaugurated, at the very beginnings of recorded history. Though society is still constructed on the patriarchal type, there is nevertheless an amount of relative mobility among the social units such as is not witnessed either in Oriental despotisms or among modern savages.

I believe, therefore, that the character of the dilemma is somewhat inadequately represented by Mr. Bagehot. It is not quite true that in a progressive society the "cake of custom" must first be cemented as firmly as possible, and then afterwards broken. For when the cementing passes beyond a certain point, the breaking becomes impracticable. The dilemma consists rather in the fact that in a progressive society the cementing and the breaking of the "cake of custom" must go on simultaneously. Observe the seeming contradiction.

While it is perfectly true that the power of concerted action on a large scale gives to the community possessing it a decided military advantage, and while it is true that in

early times this power of cooperation can hardly be gained save through the uniformity of discipline prescribed by tyrannical custom, it is also true that a considerable amount of individual variability is, even in early times, a source of military strength to the community. For in all stages of progress the law holds good that, in order to ensure a permanent supply of first-rate individual excellence, whether in intellect or in character, there must be perpetual variation,—the members of the community must not all conform to precisely the same standard of belief or action. It is not simply that out of the conflict of opinions there comes an increase of mental power, but it is that where absolute uniformity of opinion is enforced, the very individuals most capable of serving the community by reason of superior mental power are neglected, thwarted, or killed off. The truth is not yet wholly trite that the most valuable men of every age are its heretics. For this truth is obscured by the kindred truth that the heresy of one age is the orthodoxy of the next,—so that complacent orthodoxy, ignoring the historical point of view, is wont to claim as its allies to-day the very men whom it burnt or crucified in days gone by. Obviously it is in the nature of things that this should be so. If old-established ideas were never to be unsettled, new truths would cease to find recognition, and progress would be at an end. But in any age the discoverers and promulgators of new truths are to be found only among those who possess the superior mental flexibility requisite for shaking themselves loose from the network of old-established ideas. And wherever there is such mental flexibility, there is sure to be heresy. Above all is this true in early communities, for in these later times we have become so far accustomed to variations in belief and practice, and have so far substituted individual for corporate responsibility, that there is a great deal of variation which we do not count as heresy, but which formerly would have been

regarded as such. Hence in an early community, the enforcement of absolute uniformity of belief and practice must establish a kind of natural selection tending to weed out all superior flexibility of mind. As a direct result the community closes up a prolific source of military superiority in the shape of individual political and military genius; for men of the Themistokles type are not produced, as a rule, in such states of society. The indirect result will be more fully appreciated when the next chapter has shown us how closely mental flexibility is implicated with that power of representing objects and relations remote from sense which also underlies the invaluable power of anticipating future emergencies. To weed out superior flexibility of mind is to check further development in forethought or longheadedness, —a truth of which the entire history of the Oriental communities, so unlike each other in many respects, is one long and reiterated confirmation. Still further, when we recall the patent fact that the efficiency of any community is measured by the efficiency of its individual members, and that this efficiency is kept up by a kind of natural selection which is none the less potent for not working with the death-penalty as among lower animals, we shall realize how great is the military advantage entailed by free variation and competition. In illustration of all this we may recur to a historical event already cited for other purposes. When the Mede, whose laws were quoted as the very type of unchangeableness, sought to add to his overgrown dominions the modest patrimony of the Athenian, of whom it was said that he was ever curious after new and unheard-of things, the wager of battle resulted in no doubtful verdict. When it is asked how Miltiades, with his ten thousand, could so quickly put to flight Datis, with his hundred thousand, the unhesitating reply is that the result was due to the superior social organization under which the ten thousand were reared. But this superiority of organization consisted mainly in the

fact that the individual career of the Mede was prescribed by unvarying tradition, while the maxim upon which the Athenian implicitly acted was *La carrière ouverte aux talents.*

These are some of the military advantages of Mr. Bagehot's "age of discussion." But in truth they are advantages which do not belong exclusively to any age or to any epoch of development, but are operative at all times, though in different ages and communities their action is diversely complicated with the action of the opposite advantages previously considered. Mr. Bagehot's error—if it be real and not merely apparent—lies in describing as purely successive circumstances which must have been in great degree simultaneous. The "strict dilemma of early society" is not that the fetters of tyrannical custom must first be riveted and afterwards unriveted, but that they must be riveted and unriveted at the same time in communities which are destined to attain to permanent progressiveness. On the one hand we have seen that primitive societies in which uniformity of belief and practice is most sternly enforced, will prevail in the struggle for life. On the other hand we have seen that primitive societies in which flexibility of mind is most encouraged, will come out uppermost. And herein lies the seeming dilemma or contradiction.

In reality, however, as the whole question is one of warfare, so it is practically a struggle for life between these two principles. Into the numberless combinations of circumstances which have given the victory now to one side and now to the other, we cannot inquire, from lack of historical data. On general grounds we may admit that, at the outset, uniformity must have been a more important possession than flexibility; we can plainly see how those communities that conquered by means of uniformity became caught, as it were, in their own toils, and were estopped from further progression; and we can see how those communities that won the day by preserving a modicum of flexibility have

been rewarded by unlimited progressiveness. We can thus dimly discern the way in which China has become immobile, while Europe has become ever more and more mobile. But beyond these most general indications of what has happened, we can discern but little. We cannot tell precisely, for example, why the European Aryans won the day by preserving a modicum of flexibility, rather than by enforcing such a monotony of disposition as would kill out all flexibility. At the earliest dawn of history the European portion of the Aryan race already surpasses all other races, both in individual variety of character and in longheadedness. The details of the process by which this superiority was gained are hidden from us in the night of time. Upon one point, however, we may profitably speculate. Among all the historic civilizations, the European is the one of which we can most decidedly assert that it is not autochthonous. The Aryans who conquered Europe in successive Keltic, Italo-Hellenic, Teutonic, and Slavonic swarms, were not the quiet, conservative, stay-at-home people of prehistoric antiquity, but were rather the elect of all the most adventurous and flexible-minded portions of the tribally-organized population of Central Asia. Their invasion of Europe was in this respect like the subsequent invasion of England by the miscellaneous hordes roughly described as Angles and Saxons, Danes and Normans, and like the still later colonization of North America by the most mobile and adventurous elements of West-European society. We may fairly suppose that the Aryan invaders of Europe were the most supple-minded of their race,—the "come-outers," perhaps, for whom the cake of custom at home was getting too firmly cemented, but who had undergone sufficient social discipline to enable them to get along with a less solid cake in future. However this may be, the main point is that they were not aborigines but colonizers, and as such were subjected to a great heterogeneity of environing circumstances from the time when we

first catch sight of them. They were the pioneers or Yankees of prehistoric antiquity, in whom unusual flexibleness of mind was the natural result of continual change in the sets of relations to which they were obliged to make their theories and actions conform. Prehistoric antiquity presents no other case like this. The great immobile civilizations appear to have grown up in comparatively well-protected regions, where competition with outlying communities was checked at an early date. Screened in this way from intercourse with the outside world, and adapting themselves to an environment which altered but little, there was nothing which could serve to shake them loose from their monotony of discipline. A more extreme instance of a kindred phenomenon is seen in the fact that in those protected corners of the world where competition has always been at a minimum, we find the smallest conceivable amount of progress from utter bestial savagery. That same isolation which has kept the flora and fauna of Australia in such a backward state that they are now melting away before the imported plants and animals of Europe as snow melts under a vernal sun,—that same isolation has retained the Australian man until this day at the lowest level of humanity. Similar things might be said of the Fuegians, the Andaman Islanders, and some of the hill-tribes of aboriginal non-Aryan Hindus. Where there has been least competition and least natural selection, there has been least progress from savagery. Now returning to the immobile civilizations, when we bear in mind that of the two conflicting elements of military advantage, uniformity was likely to be of most importance at first and flexibility afterwards, we may begin to discern, I think, that where competition ceased at an early date, uniformity may well have carried the day and crushed out flexibility altogether. Herein we have an excellent explanation of the immobility of Egypt, China, Peru, and Mexico; and with some further qualifications an analogous case might be made

out for Assyria and Northern India. But no such early cessation of competition could have occurred in the case of our Aryan forefathers. Little as we know concerning the circumstances of their prehistoric development, we know at least that it took place on the great highway between the teeming mainland of Asia and the coveted peninsula of Europe. In this swarming region there was kept up until quite recent times that intense competition of tribe with tribe which had all but died out in Egypt and China before the dawn of history. All this entailed for each winning tribe a greater heterogeneity of environment than in any other instance. Under such circumstances uniformity could hardly have carried the day so far as to crush out flexibility. Continual change of foes to be overcome, and of natural obstacles to be surmounted, must have given the advantage at last to those tribes which had gained enough uniformity to ensure concerted action, without sacrificing their versatility of mind in the process.

To some such considerations as these we must look for the partial explanation of the fact that at the beginnings of recorded history we find in the European Aryans all the essential elements of progressiveness. The continuance of this progressiveness during the historic period is a fact which need not long detain us. Since the beginnings of Mediterranean civilization, the heterogeneity of the environment has been too great, and the changes in the environment too rapid, to allow of general stagnation; while the assaults of outer barbarism have been for the most part warded off by the military superiority which this higher civilization has entailed. At times there has been an appearance of danger that much of this hard-won advantage might be lost, not merely through assaults from without, but through causes internally operating. After the earlier incentives to noble and varied activity connected with the autonomous spirit had been destroyed by the universal hegemony of Rome, the

need for protection from the threatening barbarian began to bring about a retrogression, in which for a time uniformity seemed likely to flourish at the expense of individuality. It is instructive, from this point of view, to observe the gradual change toward an Oriental type of government which went on from the time of Augustus to that of Diocletian. In the eastern half of the Empire, after its final political severance from the western half at the end of the eighth century, this change became really consummated, and after a while defeated itself by culminating in a social stagnation and military feebleness which invited the sharp scimitar of the Mussulman. But in the West this fatal growth of patriarchal despotism was early checked by the rise of Christianity as an independent spiritual power, by the immigration of the German tribes, and by the union of these two circumstances. Europe was in no immediate danger of lapsing into an Oriental condition when an Ambrose could say to a Theodosius, "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther." The German tribes, by their direct coalescence into national aggregates, without passing through the civic stage of organization, furnished, in various degrees of completeness, the principles of representation and federation, thus adding important elements of new life to the Empire. While finally the Christianization of these tribes, leading to the famous compact by which the Head of the Church transferred the lordship of the western world from the degenerate Byzantine to the strong-armed Frank, inaugurated a balance of powers which preserved Europe henceforth from any danger of becoming either a sultanate or a caliphate. In this twofold supremacy of Church and Empire during the Middle Ages, we have one of the most remarkable compromises between antagonist forces known to history; for while the tendency of either set of forces acting alone would have been toward absolute despotism, either in the spiritual or in the temporal form, on the other hand their joint action and

counter-action was in a high degree conducive to the development of individual liberty of thought and behaviour.

The various hints here given thus combine to show how, both in historic and in prehistoric times, the European Aryans would seem to have profited by circumstances tending to encourage individuality without weakening concentration. Hence the peculiarly plastic consistency—the flexibility combined with toughness—of West-Aryan civilization. Hence the European races all possess the capacity of innovating without revolution. The English and the old Romans have exhibited this capacity in the highest degree; the Spaniards and the French, in recent times, owing to previous reversion toward a despotic *régime*, have shown themselves partially deprived of it. But while it is thus manifested in quite various degrees, all alike possess it in a high degree as compared with those races which have been arrested in the Oriental stage of civilization.

The successful achievement of innovation without revolution depends mainly upon an artifice which derives its validity from one of the most deep-seated tendencies of the human mind, and which has unquestionably been one of the chief agencies in forwarding social progress. I refer to the artifice of "legal fiction," as shown in the pretence that the novelty of belief or practice just inaugurated has its warrant in time-honoured precedent. The disposition to justify all innovation by means of this artifice is so strongly rooted in human nature that it is likely to be manifested for a long time to come,—probably until the millennial victory of that "pure reason" about which sentimental philosophers have prated, but which hitherto has played a very subordinate part in shaping human affairs. It is this disposition which leads the orthodox, after resisting some scientific heresy until resistance is no longer possible, to discover all at once that the heresy was really taught by Suarez, or St. Augustine, or Moses. It is this which enables changes to be made "constitutionally," or

in accordance with a system of edicts framed in an age when the changes in question could not possibly have been contemplated or provided for. Yet among ourselves, where the dread of novelty is comparatively slight, there is some difficulty in realizing how all-essential is this kind of artifice in early times. "To this day many semi-civilized races have great difficulty in regarding any arrangement as binding and conclusive unless they can also manage to look at it as an inherited usage. Sir Henry Maine, in his last work, gives a most curious case. The English Government in India has in many cases made new and great works of irrigation, of which no ancient Indian Government ever thought; and it has generally left it to the native village community to say what share each man of the village should have in the water; and the village authorities have accordingly laid down a series of most minute rules about it. But the peculiarity is, that in no case do these rules 'purport to emanate from the personal authority of their author or authors, which rests on grounds of reason, not on grounds of innocence and sanctity; nor do they assume to be dictated by a sense of equity; there is always, I am assured, a sort of fiction under which some customs as to the distribution of water are supposed to have emanated from a remote antiquity, although, in fact, no such artificial supply had ever been so much as thought of.' So difficult does this ancient race—like, probably, in this respect so much of the ancient world—find it to imagine a rule which is obligatory, but not traditional."[1]

Now among the European Aryans, within historic times, this species of artifice assumed a form which made it in a very high degree conducive to the permanent progressiveness of the race. If we look into the great writers who in the seventeenth century illustrated with exquisite beauty and clearness the doctrines of Public Law, we find their heads filled with the notion of a primitive natural code, fit for

[1] Bagehot, *Physics and Politics*, p. 142.

regulating international concerns, and for supplying everywhere the shortcomings of civil legislation, its degenerate offspring, whose worth must be rated according to the degree in which it approaches the perfection of its parent. The influence of this conception may be best appreciated by reflecting on the extent to which contemporary legal literature, whether embodied in expository treatises or in judicial decisions, is impregnated by it. The appeals to "right reason" and "natural reason" which since Blackstone's time have filled a considerable place in juristic dissertation, bear unequivocal marks of their origin. Nowhere better than here can we see exemplified the mighty influence of the ideas of Roman jurisprudence upon modern thought. Sir Henry Maine has well delineated the process by which, from the constantly felt want of a system of principles fit for settling disputes between Roman citizens and aliens or foreigners, there gradually arose in the Prætorian courts an equitable body of law founded upon customs common (or assumed as common) to all peoples alike. But far from comprehending the really progressive character of the noble juristic system steadily growing up under their own supervision—daily attaining grander proportions as the grotesque and barbarous elements hallowed by local usage were one by one eliminated from the body of equitable ideas which formed their common substratum—the Prætors of the Republic and the great Antonine jurisconsults, under the immediate influence of Stoic conceptions, supposed themselves to be merely restoring to their original integrity the disfigured and partially obliterated ordinances of a primeval state of nature. The state of faultless morality and unimpeachable equity which constituted the ideal goal of their labours, they mistook for the shadow of a real though unseen past.

But this form of the unconscious artifice—due in general to the great heterogeneity of the Roman environment, and in particular to the continual interaction between Greek and

Roman ideas—was very different from the form of it exemplified by the Hindu who refers his modern edicts about water-supply to some remote era of primitive legislation. Between the two there is a world-wide difference,—all the difference between stagnation and progress. For the abstract and impersonal form in which the Roman conceived his *Jus Naturæ* made it possible for him to appeal to it, not simply in justification of particular departures from ancient custom, but in justification of the general principle of departure from ancient custom. It constituted, as it were, a court of appeal before which time-honoured customs must be called upon to establish their validity. It opened men's minds to the distinction between *mala prohibita* and *mala in se*. It prepared the way for the recognition of a "higher law" of God as distinct from the local and temporary laws of man. And in this way it no doubt contributed largely toward the establishment of Christianity as an independent spiritual power in the Empire.

To deal adequately with these interesting illustrations would require us to extend this part of our discussion to disproportionate length. Our purpose is sufficiently subserved by the foregoing fragmentary statement, in which the problem of human progressiveness, though not fully solved, is at least so far classified that the solution of it is facilitated. We have seen that permanent progressiveness is found where the social aggregate is characterized by a cohesion among its parts which is neither too little nor too great. An excess and a deficiency of individual mobility have been shown to be alike incompatible with that persistent tendency toward internal rearrangement which we call progressiveness. The sociological puzzle to which Mr. Bagehot has called attention, and with which we have been concerned in the present chapter, is substantially the same thing as the dynamic paradox which confronted us when, in the fourth chapter, we were seeking to determine the conditions which

enable Evolution in general to result in continuous increase of structural and functional complexity. The present case is, indeed, but a special form of the more general case. How to secure a compromise between fluidity and rigidity is in both cases the essential desideratum. Where the units which make up the aggregate have too much individual freedom of motion, the result is a fluid state in which there is no chance for stable structural arrangements. Where they have too little freedom of motion, the result is a solid state in which there is no chance for structural rearrangements. In the first case, where there is so little dissipation of motion, there is little or no Evolution. In the second case, where so little internal motion is retained, the Evolution which occurs is simply or chiefly a process of consolidation, unattended by any considerable advance from indeterminate uniformity toward determinate multiformity.

Bearing in mind that we are dealing, not with a mere series of striking analogies, but with a group of real resemblances which result from a fundamental homology between the special process here considered and the more general process which includes it, let us observe that one chief circumstance which secures mobility without loss of coherence is a heterogeneous and ever-changing social environment, to the heterogeneous changes of which the community is continually required to adjust itself. The illustrations above given unite in showing that where circumstances have afforded such a heterogeneous environment (as a perpetual external excitant of internal rearrangements), the communities which have survived through relatively-complete adjustment have manifested a permanent capacity for progress. Thus is our problem completely connected with the more general problem of natural selection, and with the most general problem of Evolution as manifested in all orders of phenomena. And thus the essential continuity of the processes of Nature is again strikingly illustrated.

these inadequate instances, our critics ask us how it is possible to imagine that a race possessed of such a godlike intellect, such a keen æsthetic sense, and such a lofty soul, should ever have descended from a race of mere brutes. And again they ask us how can a race endowed with such a capacity for progress be genetically akin to those lower races of which even the highest show no advance from one generation to another. Confronted thus by difficulties which reason and imagination seem alike incompetent to overcome, they too often either give up the problem as insoluble, or else—which amounts to nearly the same thing—have recourse to the *deus ex machinâ* as an aid in solving it.

Influenced, no doubt, by some such mental habit as this, Mr. St. George Mivart declares that, while thoroughly agreeing with Mr. Darwin as to man's zoological position, he nevertheless regards the difference between ape and mushroom as less important than the difference between ape and man, so soon as we take into the account "the totality of man's being."[1] In this emphatic statement there is a certain amount of truth, though Mr. Mivart is not justified in implying that it is a truth which the Darwinian is bound not to recognize. The enormous difference between civilized man and the highest of brute animals is by no one more emphatically recognized than by the evolutionist, who holds that to the process of organic development there has been superadded a stupendous process of social development, and who must therefore admit that with the beginning of human civilization there was opened a new chapter in the history of the universe, so far as we know it. From the human point of view we may contentedly grant that, for all practical purposes, the difference between an ape and a mushroom is of less consequence than the difference between an ape and an educated European of the nineteenth century. But to take this educated European as a typical sample of mankind,

[1] *Nature*, April 20, 1871.

and to contrast him directly with chimpanzees and gibbons, is in the highest degree fallacious; since the proceeding involves the omission of a host of facts which, when taken into the account, must essentially modify the aspect of the whole case.

When we take the refined and intellectual Teuton, with his one hundred and fourteen cubic inches of brain, and set him alongside of the chimpanzee with his thirty-five cubic inches of brain, the difference seems so enormous as to be incompatible with any original kinship. But when we interpose the Australian, whose brain, measuring seventy cubic inches, comes considerably nearer to that of the chimpanzee than to that of the Teuton, the case is entirely altered, and we are no longer inclined to admit sweeping statements about the immeasurable superiority of man, which we may still admit, provided they are restricted to civilized man. If we examine the anatomical composition of these brains, the discovery that in structural complexity the Teutonic cerebrum surpasses the Australian even more than the latter surpasses that of the chimpanzee, serves to strengthen us in our position. And when we pass from facts of anatomy to facts of psychology, we obtain still further confirmation; for we find that the difference in structure is fully paralleled by the difference in functional manifestation. If the Englishman shows such wonderful command of relations of space, time, and number, as to be able to tell us that to an observer stationed at Greenwich on the 7th of June, A.D. 2004, at precisely nine minutes and fifty-six seconds after five o'clock in the morning, Venus will begin to cross the sun's disc; on the other hand, the Australian is able to count only up to five or six, and cannot tell us the number of fingers on his two hands, since so large a number as ten excites in him only an indefinite impression of plurality.[1] Our conception of

[1] The Dammaras, according to Mr. Galton, are even worse off than this. "When they wish to express four, they take to their fingers, which are to

the godlike intellect evidently will not apply here. If the emotions of the German and his intellectual perceptions of the fitness of harmonious sounds for expressing emotion are so deep and subtle and varied as to result in the production of choruses like those of Handel and symphonies like those of Beethoven, on the other hand the crude emotions of the Australian are quite adequately expressed by the discordant yells and howls which constitute the sole kind of music appreciable by his undeveloped ears. We look in vain here for traces of the keen æsthetic sense which in a measure links together our intellectual and moral natures. Again, if the American student has been known to be actuated by such noble ethical impulses and guided by such lofty conceptions of morality as to leave his comfortable home and his

them as formidable instruments of calculation as a sliding rule is to an English school-boy. They puzzle very much after five, because no spare hand remains to grasp and secure the fingers that are required for units. Yet they seldom lose oxen; the way in which they discover the loss of one is not by the number of the herd being diminished, but by the absence of a face they know. When bartering is going on, each sheep must be paid for separately. Thus, suppose two sticks of tobacco to be the rate of exchange for one sheep, it would sorely puzzle a Dammara to take two sheep and give him four sticks. I have done so, and seen a man put two of the sticks apart, and take a sight over them at one of the sheep he was about to sell. Having satisfied himself that that one was honestly paid for, and finding to his surprise that exactly two sticks remained in hand to settle the account for the other sheep, he would be afflicted with doubts; the transaction seemed to come out too 'pat' to be correct, and he would refer back to the first couple of sticks; and then his mind got hazy and confused, and wandered from one sheep to the other, and he broke off the transaction until two sticks were put into his hand, and one sheep driven away, and then the other two sticks given him, and the second sheep driven away. . . . Once while I watched a Dammara floundering hopelessly in a calculation on one side of me, I observed Dinah, my spaniel, equally embarrassed on the other. She was overlooking half-a-dozen of her new-born puppies, which had been removed two or three times from her, and her anxiety was excessive, as she tried to find out if they were all present, or if any were still missing. She kept puzzling and running her eyes over them, backwards and forwards, but could not satisfy herself. She evidently had a vague notion of counting, but the figure was too large for her brain. Taking the two as they stood, dog and Dammara, the comparison reflected no great honour on the man."—Galton, *Tropical South Africa*, p. 132, cited in Lubbock, *Origin of Civilization*, Amer. ed., p. 294. See also Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, vol. i. pp. 218—246. Probably the dual number, in grammar, "preserves the memorial of that stage of thought when all beyond two was an idea of indefinite number." Id. p. 240.

favourite pursuits, and engage in rough warfare, at the risk of life and limb, solely or chiefly that he might assist in relieving the miseries of far inferior men, whose direct claim upon his personal sympathies could never be other than slight, on the other hand the Australian has no words in his language to express the ideas of justice and benevolence, and no amount of teaching can make him comprehend these ideas. For although, like some brute animals, he is not wholly destitute of the primary feelings which underlie them, yet these feelings have been so seldom repeated in his own experience, and that of his ancestors, that he is unable to generalize from them. The lofty soul, which is too sweepingly attributed to man in distinction from other animals, is here as difficult to discover as the godlike intellect or the keen æsthetic sense.

In similar wise is made to disappear the sharp contrast between human and brute animals in capability of progress. Hardly any fact is more imposing to the imagination than the fact that each generation of civilized men is perceptibly more enlightened than the preceding one, while each generation of brutes exactly resembles those which have come before it. But the contrast is obtained only by comparing the civilized European of to-day directly with the brute animals known to us through the short period of recorded human history. The capability of progress, however, is by no means shared alike by all races of men. Of the numerous races historically known to us, it has been manifested in a marked degree only by two,—the Aryan and Semitic. To a much less conspicuous extent it has been exhibited by the Chinese and Japanese, the Copts of Egypt, and a few of the highest American races. On the other hand, the small-brained races —the Australians and Papuans, the Hottentots, and the majority of tribes constituting the widespread Malay and American families—appear almost wholly incapable of progress, even under the guidance of higher races. The most

that can be said for them is, that they are somewhat more imitative and somewhat more teachable than any brute animals. In the presence of the Aryan, even under the most favourable circumstances, they tend to become extinguished, rather than to appropriate the results of a civilization which there is no reason to suppose they could ever have originated. The two great races of Middle Africa, the Negroes and the Kaffirs,[1] have shown, by their ability to endure slave labour, their superiority to those above mentioned; but their career, where it has not been interfered with by white men, has been but little less monotonous than the career of a brute species. Of all these barbarian races, we commonly say that they have no history; and by this we mean that throughout long ages they have made no appreciable progress. In a similar sense we should say of a race of monkeys or elephants, that it has no history.

Of like import is the fact, that as we go backward in time we find the progressiveness of the civilized races continually diminishing. No previous century ever saw anything approaching to the increase in social complexity which has been wrought in America and Europe since 1789. In science and in the industrial arts the change has been greater than in the ten preceding centuries taken together. Contrast the seventeen centuries which it took to remodel the astronomy of Hipparchos with the forty years which it has taken to remodel the chemistry of Berzelius and the biology of Cuvier. Note how the law of gravitation was nearly a century in getting generally accepted by foreign astronomers,[2] while

[1] It is Haeckel who asserts a distinction of race between the Negroes and Kaffirs. It is not necessary, however, to insist upon the distinction.

[2] It was still on trial in France in 1749, when Clairaut and Lalande magnificently verified it by calculating the retardation of Halley's comet. It may be said that the French are notoriously slow in adopting ideas which have originated in other countries, and that they now ignore natural selection much as they formerly ignored gravitation. Nevertheless, in spite of the Academy and M. Flourens, there are plain indications that the doctrine of special creations is doomed speedily to suffer the fate in France which it has already suffered in Germany, England, and America.

within half a dozen years from its promulgation, the theory of natural selection was accepted by the great majority of naturalists. How small the difference between the clumsy waggons of the Tudor period and the mail-coach in which our grandfathers rode, compared to the difference between the mail-coach and the railway train! How rapid the changes in philosophic thinking since the time of the *Encyclopédistes*, in comparison with the slow though important changes which occurred between the epoch of Aristotle and the epoch of Descartes! In morality, both individual and national, and in general humanity of disposition and refinement of manners, the increased rapidity of change has been no less marked.

But these considerations are immensely increased in force when we take into account those epochs which, in the light of our present knowledge, can alone properly be termed ancient. Far beyond the comparatively recent period at which human history began on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, extend the ages during which, as palæontology shows us, both the eastern and the western hemispheres were peopled by races of men. Ten thousand centuries before the time of Homer and the Vedic poets, wild men, with brute-like crania, carried on the struggle for existence with mammoths, tigers, and gigantic bears, long since extinct. And recent researches make it probable that even this enormous period must be multiplied six- or eightfold before we can arrive at the time when men first appeared upon the earth as creatures zoologically distinct from apes. The significance of these conclusions, even when we take into account only the shorter epoch of a single million of years, cannot be too strongly insisted upon. They show us that it is only in recent times that man has become widely distinguished from other animals by his capability of progress. If, as evidence of our present progressiveness, we cite the superiority of our Whitworth guns and Chassepot

evolution had proceeded sufficiently far to admit of the evolution of life: upon Saturn and Jupiter, as we have seen, the genesis of anything like what we know as life would appear still to be impossible. Again, after the first appearance of life upon our earth, a long time must have elapsed before protists, simple plants, and nerveless animals, were succeeded by animals sufficiently complex to manifest even the most rudimentary phases of psychical life. And again, as we can now see, the evolution of physical and psychical life to the very high degree exemplified in the primeval ape-like man, was followed by a somewhat long period, during which the still higher psychical changes constituting social evolution were slowly assuming their distinctive characteristics.

Social evolution, therefore, regarded as a complicated series of intellectual and emotional changes determined by the aggregation of men into communities, is a new order of evolution, more highly compounded than any that had gone before it. When, in the course of the struggle for existence, men began to unite in family groups of comparatively permanent organization, a new era was begun in the progress of things upon the earth's surface. A new set of structural and functional changes began, which for a long while proceeding with the slowness characteristic of the early stages of every order of evolution, are at last proceeding with a rapidity only to be slackened when some penultimate stage of equilibrium is approached. Hence it is in the highest degree unphilosophical to attempt to explain the present position of civilized man solely by reference to the laws of organic and psychical evolution as obtained by the study of life in general. It is for biology to explain the differences between the human hand and foot and the hands and feet of the other primates;[1] but the chief differences between civilized man and the other members of the order to which

[1] See Prof. Huxley's admirable monograph on *Man's Place in Nature.*

he belongs are psychological differences, and the immense series of psychical changes to which they are due has been all along determined by social conditions.

The all-important contrast, therefore—for our present purpose—*is not between man and other primates, extinct and contemporary, but between civilized man and primitive man.* Already we have found that the lowest contemporary man, whose social organization has never reached any higher form than that of the simplest tribal community, exhibits but scanty traces of the godlike intellect, the refined tastes, or the lofty soul which we are accustomed to ascribe to humanity in general as its distinctive attributes. Humanity, zoologically considered, exists to-day, to which these attributes cannot be ascribed without a considerable strain upon the accepted meanings of our words. Zoologically, the Australian belongs to the genus *Homo*, and is therefore nearer to us than to the gorilla or gibbon; psychologically, he is in many respects further removed from us than from these man-like apes. No one will deny that the intellectual progress implied in counting up to five or six, though equally important, is immeasurably inferior in quantity to the subsequent progress implied in the solution of dynamical problems by means of the integral calculus,—an achievement to which the average modern engineer is competent. But in going back to the primeval man, we must descend to a lower grade of intelligence than that which is occupied by the Australian. We must traverse the immensely long period during which the average human skull was enlarging from a capacity of thirty-five inches, like that of the highest apes, to a capacity of seventy inches, like those post-glacial European skulls, of which the one found at Neanderthal is a specimen, and which are about on a par with the skulls of Australians. And when we have reached the beginning of this period—possibly in the Miocene epoch—we may fairly represent to ourselves the individuals of the human genus as animals differing in

little save a more marked sociality from the dryopithecus and other extinct half-human apes. We may represent primitive man as an animal in whom, physical and psychical changes having hitherto proceeded *pari passu*, intelligence had at length arrived at a point where variations in it would sooner be seized on by natural selection than variations in physical structure. When among primates possessed of such an intelligence, the family groups temporarily formed among all mammals began to become permanent, then we must say that there began the career of humanity as distinguished from animality. For countless ages our ancestors probably were still but slightly distinguished from other primates, save that their increasing intelligence, their use of weapons, and their habits of combination, rendered them more than a match for much larger and stronger animals. In the later Pliocene times these primitive men may have come to bear some resemblance to the lowest contemporary savages. Human remains and relics of the still later glacial period supply clear proof of such a resemblance; yet the absence of any improvement in weapons and implements for many ages longer shows that as yet there was but little capability of progress. Of the career of mankind during the eight hundred thousand years which would seem to have elapsed since the era of the cave bear and woolly rhinoceros,[1] we possess many vestiges. But every-

[1] In assigning this conjectural date, I follow the theory which connects the great glacial epoch with that notable increase in the eccentricity of the earth's orbit which, as calculated by Mr. Croll, began about 950,000 years B.C., and lasted 200,000 years. But while the fact of this great increase of eccentricity is, I presume, well established, and while it can hardly fail to have wrought marked climatic changes, it is by no means proved that the glaciation of Europe and North America was produced solely or chiefly by this circumstance; and accordingly I do not care to insist upon the chronology which I have adopted in the text. Nor is it necessary for the validity of my argument that it should be insisted on. What we do know is, that men existed both in Europe and in North America at the beginning of the glacial period; that this extensive dispersal implies the existence of the human race for a long time previous to this epoch; and that thus we obtain a dumb antiquity in comparison with which the whole duration of the voice of historic tradition shrinks to a mere point of time. And this is all that my argument requires.

thing indicates the most extreme barbarism; nowhere does there appear a trace of anything like even the rudest civilization, until we reach that comparatively recent epoch antecedent to the dawn of history, but accessible to philology. The partial restoration of the Aryan mother-tongue enables us to go back perhaps a dozen or fifteen centuries beyond the age of Homer and the Vedas, and catch a few glimpses of the prehistoric Aryans, — an agricultural race completely tribal in organization, but acquainted with the use of metals, and showing marks of an intelligence decidedly above that of high contemporary barbarians like the Kaffirs. At the same time the deciphering of hieroglyphics on Egyptian monuments reveals to us the existence in the valley of the Nile of an old and immobile civilization, organized on a tribal basis, like that of China, already sinking in political decrepitude at the ill-defined era at which we first catch sight of it. Of the beginnings of civilization on the Nile, and also, indeed, on the Euphrates, and of the stages by which the Aryans arrived at the intellectual pre-eminence to which their recovered language bears witness, we know absolutely nothing. But even if we were to allow twenty thousand years for these proceedings,—an interval nearly seven times as long as that which separates the Homeric age from our own time—we should obtain but a brief period compared with the countless ages of unmitigated barbarism which preceded it. The progress of mankind is like a geometrical progression. For a good while the repeated doubling produces quite unobtrusive results; but as we begin to reach the large numbers the increase suddenly becomes astonishing. Since the beginning of recorded history we have been moving among the large numbers, and each decade now witnesses a greater amount of psychical achievement than could have been witnessed in thousands of years among pre-glacial men. Such a result is just what the Doctrine of Evolution teaches us to anticipate; and it thoroughly confirms our statement

that, in point of intelligence and capacity for progress, the real contrast is not between all mankind and other primates, but between civilized and primeval man.

Let us now consider some of the leading characteristics of this gradual but increasingly rapid intellectual progress, regarded as a growing correspondence between the human mind and its environment.

In the second chapter of our Prolegomena it was shown that the highest kinds of scientific knowledge differ only in degree from the lowest kinds of what is called ordinary knowledge. In spite of their great differences in mental capacity, it is obvious that the antelope who on hearing a roar from the neighbouring thicket infers that it is high time to run for his life, the Bushman who on seeing the torn carcass of the antelope infers that a lion has recently been present, and the astronomer who on witnessing certain unforeseen irregularities in the motions of Uranus infers that an unknown planet is attracting it, perform one and all the same kind of mental operation. In the three cases the processes are fundamentally the same, though differing in complexity according to the number and remoteness of the past and present relations which are compared. In each case the process is at bottom a grouping of objects and of relations according to their likenesses and unlikenesses. It was similarly shown that all knowledge is a classification of experiences, and that every act of knowledge is an act of classification; that an act of *inference*, such as is involved in simple cases of perception, is "the attributing to a body, in consequence of some of its properties, all those properties by virtue of which it is referred to a particular class"; that the "forming of a *generalization* is the putting together in one class all those cases which present like relations"; and that "the drawing a *deduction* is essentially the perception that a particular case belongs to a certain class of cases previously generalized. So that, as ordinary classification is a grouping

together of *like things;* reasoning is a grouping together of *like relations* among things."[1] In this fundamental doctrine the two different schools of modern psychology, represented respectively by Mr. Bain and Mr. Mansel, will thoroughly agree. But from this it inevitably follows that the highest and the lowest manifestations of intelligence consist respectively of processes which differ only in heterogeneity and definiteness and in the extent to which they are compounded.

But while proving that science is but an extension of ordinary knowledge, it was also proved that the higher orders of knowledge differ from the lower in the greater remoteness, generality, and abstractness of the relations which they formulate, in the greater definiteness of their formulas, and in their more complete organization. Our inquiry into the mutual relations of life and intelligence[2] elicited an exactly parallel set of conclusions. It was there shown that psychical life consists in the continuous establishment of subjective relations answering to objective relations; and that, as we advance through the animal kingdom from the lowest to the highest forms, this correspondence between the mind and the environment extends to relations which are continually more remote in space and time, more clearly defined, but at the same time more general; and finally we also traced a progressive organization of correspondences. Continually, while passing in review the various aspects of the progress of intelligence in the animal kingdom, we found ourselves ending with illustrations drawn from that progress of human intelligence which is determined by social conditions. Let us now illustrate this subject somewhat further by tracing out the intellectual correspondence between man and his environment, as increasing in remoteness, in speciality and generality, in complexity, in definiteness, and in coherent organization.

[1] Spencer's *Essays*, 1st series, p. 189; see above, part i. chap. ii.; part ii. chap. xv.

[2] See above, part ii. chap. xiv.

The extension of the correspondence in space is a marked characteristic of intellectual progress, which we have already traced through the ascending groups of the animal kingdom, but which is carried much further by man than by any lower animal. It is no doubt true that the direct adjustments of psychical relations to distant objective relations, effected by unaided perception, have a narrower range in civilized men than in uncivilized men or in several of the higher mammals and birds. It is a familiar fact that the senses of civilized man—or at least the three senses which have a considerable range in space—are less acute and less extensive in range than those of the barbarian. It is said that a Bushman can see as far with the naked eye as a European can see with a field-glass; and certain wild and domestic birds and mammals, as the falcon, the vulture, and perhaps the greyhound, have still longer vision. Among the different classes of civilized men, those who, by living on the fruits of brain-work done indoors, are most widely differentiated from primeval men, have as a general rule the shortest vision. And the rapid increase of indoor life, which is one of the marked symptoms of modern civilization, tends not only to make myopia more frequent, but also to diminish the average range of vision in persons who are not myopic. There may very likely have been a similar, though less conspicuous and less carefully observed, decrease in the range of hearing. And the sense of smell, which is so marvellously efficient in the majority of mammals and in many savages, is to us of little use as an aid in effecting correspondences in space.

In the case also of those simpler indirect adjustments which would seem, perhaps, to involve the use of the cerebellum chiefly, we have partially lost certain powers possessed by savages and lower animals. There are few things in which civilized men differ among themselves more conspicuously than the recollection of places, the identification of landmarks, and the ability to reach a distant point

through crooked streets without losing the way. But in these respects the most sagacious of us are but bunglers compared with primitive men or with dogs and foxes. Few things are more striking than the unerring instinct with which the Indian makes his way through utterly trackless forests, seldom stopping to make up his mind, and taking in at a single glance whole groups of signs which to his civilized companion are inappreciable. The loss of this power of co-ordination, like the decrease in the range of the senses, is undoubtedly due to disuse, the circumstances of civilized life affording little or no occasion for the exercise of these faculties.[1]

But although in these respects the correspondence in space does not seem to have been extended with the progress of civilization, yet in those far more indirect and complicated adjustments which, as involving time-relations of force and cause, depend largely on the aid of the cerebrum, the civilized man surpasses the savage to a much greater extent than the savage surpasses the wolf or lion. "By combining his own perceptions with the perceptions of others as registered in maps," the modern "can reach special places lying thousands of miles away over the earth's surface. A ship, guided by compass and stars and chronometer, brings him from the antipodes information by which his purchases here are adapted to prices there. From the characters of exposed strata he infers the presence of coal below; and thereupon adjusts the sequences of his actions to coexistences a thousand feet beneath. Nor is the environment

[1] In the course of the recent interesting discussion and correspondence in *Nature* concerning the "sense of direction" exhibited in barbarians and lower animals, it was observed that a party of Samoyeds will travel in a direct line from one point to another over trackless fields of ice, even on cloudy nights, when there is accordingly nothing whatever that is visible to guide their course. It would be too much to assert that this faculty is utterly lost in civilized man, so that a temporary recurrence to the conditions of barbaric life might not revive it; but even if retained at all, it is certainly kept quite in abeyance.

through which his correspondences reach limited to the surface and the substance of the earth. It stretches into the surrounding sphere of infinity." In all these respects, the extension of the correspondence achieved during the progress of civilization has been much greater than that achieved during the immediately preceding stages of the evolution of man from an inferior primate. "From early races acquainted only with neighbouring localities, up to modern geographers who specify the latitude and longitude of every place on the globe; from the ancient builders and metallurgists, knowing but surface deposits, up to the geologists of our day whose data in some cases enable them to describe the material existing at a depth never yet reached by the miner; from the savage barely able to say in how many days a full moon will return, up to the astronomer who ascertains the period of revolution of a double star;—there has been " an enormous " widening of the surrounding region throughout which the adjustment of inner to outer relations extends."[1] It only remains to add that the later and more conspicuous stages of this progress have been determined by that increase in the size and heterogeneity of the social environment which results from the growing interdependence of communities once isolated, and which we have already seen to be the fundamental element of progress in general. For this integration of communities has not only directly enlarged the area throughout which adjustments are required to be made, but it has indirectly aided the advances in scientific knowledge requisite for making the adjustments.

Great, however, as has been the extension of the correspondence in space which has characterized the progress of the favoured portion of humanity from barbarism to civilization, the extension of the correspondence in time is a much more conspicuous and more distinctly human phenomenon. As we trace this kind of mental evolution through sundry

[1] Spencer, *Principles of Psychology*, vol. i. pp. 317, 319.

classes and orders of the animal kingdom in an ascending series, it is to be observed that until we reach the higher mammals the two kinds of correspondence advance together, —the distance at which outer relations are cognized forming a measure of the interval by which their effects may be anticipated. But among the higher mammals there is observed a higher order of adjustments to future emergencies, which advances more rapidly than the extension of the correspondence in space, and which in the human race first acquires a notable development. "Not that the transition is sudden," observes Mr. Spencer. "During the first stages of human progress, the method of estimating epochs does not differ in nature from that employed by the more intelligent animals. There are historical traces of the fact that originally the civilized races adjusted their actions to the longer sequences in the environment just as Australians and Bushmen do now, by observing their coincidence with the migrations of birds, the floodings of rivers, the flowerings of plants. And it is obvious that the savages who, after the ripening of a certain berry, travel to the seashore, knowing that they will then find a particular shell-fish in season, are guided by much the same process as the dog who, on seeing the cloth laid for dinner, goes to the window to watch for his master. But when these phenomena of the seasons are observed to coincide with recurring phenomena in the heavens,—when, as was the case with the aboriginal Hottentots, periods come to be measured partly by astronomical and partly by terrestrial changes,—then we see making its appearance a means whereby the correspondence in time may be indefinitely extended. The sun's daily movements and the monthly phases of the moon having once been generalized, and some small power of counting having been reached, it becomes possible to recognize the interval between antecedents and consequents that are long apart, and to adjust the actions to them. Multitudes of sequences

in the environment which, in the absence of answering functional periods, cannot be directly responded to by the organism, may be discerned and indirectly responded to when there arises this ability of numbering days and lunations."[1]

In the advance to high stages of civilization, the extension of the correspondence in time is most conspicuously exemplified in the habitual adjustment of our theories and actions to sequences more or less remote in the future. In no other respect is civilized man more strikingly distinguished from the barbarian than in his power to adapt his conduct to future events, whether contingent or certain to occur. The ability to forego present enjoyment in order to avoid the risk of future disaster is what we call prudence or providence; and the barbarian is above all things imprudent and improvident. Doubtless the superior prudence of the civilized man is due in great part to his superior power of self-restraint; so that this class of phenomena may be regarded as illustrating one of the phases of moral progress. Nevertheless there are several purely intellectual elements which enter as important factors into the case. The power of economizing in harvest-time or in youth, in order to retain something upon which to live comfortably in winter or in old age, is obviously dependent upon the vividness with which distant sets of circumstances can be pictured in the imagination. The direction of the volitions involved in the power of self-restraint must be to a great extent determined by the comparative vividness with which the distant circumstances and the present circumstances are mentally realized. And the power of distinctly imagining objective relations not present to sense is probably the most fundamental of the many intellectual differences between the civilized man and the barbarian, since it underlies both the class of phenomena which we are now considering, and the class of phenomena comprised in artistic, scientific, and philosophic

[1] Spencer, op. cit. i. 326.

progress. The savage, with his small and undeveloped cerebrum, plays all summer, like the grasshopper in the fable, eating and wasting whatever he can get; for although he knows that the dreaded winter is coming, during which he must starve and shiver, he is nevertheless unable to realize these distant feelings with sufficient force to determine his volition in the presence of his actual feeling of repugnance to toil. But the civilized man, with his large and complex cerebrum, has so keen a sense of remote contingencies that he willingly submits to long years of drudgery, in order to avoid poverty in old age, pays out each year a portion of his hard-earned money to provide for losses by fire which may never occur, builds houses and accumulates fortunes for posterity to enjoy, and now and then enacts laws to forestall possible disturbances or usurpations a century hence. Again, the progress of scientific knowledge, familiarizing civilized man with the idea of an inexorable regularity of sequence among events, greatly assists him in the adjustment of his actions to far-distant emergencies. He who ascribes certain kinds of suffering to antecedent neglect of natural laws is more likely to shape his conduct so as to avoid a recurrence of the infliction, than he who attributes the same kinds of suffering to the wrath of an offended quasi-human Deity, and fondly hopes, by ceremonial propitiation of the Deity, to escape in future.

This power of shaping actions so as to meet future contingencies has been justly recognized by political economists as an indispensable pre-requisite to the accumulation of wealth in any community, without which no considerable degree of progress can be attained. The impossibility of getting barbarians to work, save under the stimulus of actually present necessities, has been one of the chief obstacles in the way of missionaries who have attempted to civilize tribal communities. The Jesuits, in the seventeenth century, were the most successful of Christian missionaries, and their proceedings with the Indians of Paraguay constitute one of the

most brilliant feats in missionary annals. Such unparalleled ascendency did the priests acquire over the imaginations of these barbarians that they actually made them cease from warfare. They taught them European methods of agriculture, as well as the arts of house-building, painting, dyeing, furniture-making, even the use of watches; and they administered the affairs of the community with a despotic power which has seldom been equalled either in absoluteness or in beneficence. Nevertheless the superficiality of all this show of civilization was illustrated by the fact that, unless perpetually watched, the workmen would go home leaving their oxen yoked to the plough, or would even cut them up for supper if no other meat happened to be at hand. Examples of a state of things intermediate between this barbaric improvidence and the care-taking foresight of the European are to be found among the Chinese,—a people who have risen far above barbarism, but whose civilization is still of a primitive type. The illustration is rendered peculiarly forcible by the fact that the Chinese are a very industrious people, and where the returns for labour are immediate will work as steadily as Germans or Americans. Owing to their crowded population, every rood of ground is needed for cultivation, and upon their great rivers the traveller continually meets with little floating farms constructed upon rafts and held in place by anchors. Yet side by side with these elaborate but fragile structures are to be seen acres of swamp-land which only need a few years of careful draining to become permanently fit for tillage. So incapable are the Chinese of adapting their actions to sequences at all remote, that they continue, age after age, to resort to such temporary devices, rather than to bestow their labour where its fruits, however enduring, cannot be enjoyed from the outset.[1] The contrast proves that the cause is the intellectual inability to realize vividly a group of

[1] See Mill, *Political Economy*, book i. chap. xi.

future conditions, involving benefits not immediately to be felt.

Of the correspondence in time, even more forcibly than of the correspondence in space, it may be said that its extension during the process of social evolution has been much greater than during the organic evolution of the human race from some ancestral primate. Between the Australian, on the one hand, who cannot estimate the length of a month, or provide even for certain disaster which does not stare him in the face, and whose theory of things is adapted only to events which occur during his own lifetime; and, on the other hand, the European, with his practical foresight, his elaborate scientific previsions, and his systems of philosophy, which embrace alike the earliest traceable cosmical changes and the latest results of civilization; the intellectual gulf is certainly far wider than that which divides the Australian from the fox who hides the bird which he has killed, in order to return when hungry to eat it.

It remains to add that the later and more conspicuous stages of this kind of intellectual progress have obviously been determined by the increase in the size and heterogeneity of the social environment. For the integration of communities to which this increase is due has not only indirectly aided the advances in scientific knowledge requisite for making mental adjustments to long sequences, past and future, but it has also directly assisted the disposition to work patiently in anticipation of future returns, by increasing the general security and diminishing the chances that the returns to labour may be lost.

The extension of the correspondence between subjective and objective relations in time and in space answers to that kind of primary integration which underlies the process of evolution in general. In treating of the enlarged area, in time and space, throughout which inner relations are adjusted to outer relations, we have been treating of intellectual pro-

gress regarded as a growth. But in proceeding to speak of the increasing heterogeneity, definiteness, and coherence of the adjustments, we proceed to treat of intellectual progress regarded as a development. Here, as elsewhere, throughout all save the simplest orders of evolution, quantitative increase is accompanied by qualitative increase. The knowledge is not only greater and the intellectual capacity greater, but the knowledge is more complex, accurate, and unified, and the intellectual capacity is more varied.

The increase of the correspondence in definiteness may be sufficiently illustrated by the following brief citation from Mr. Spencer: "Manifestly the reduction of objective phenomena to definite measures gives to those subjective actions that correspond with them a degree of precision, a special fitness, greatly beyond that possessed by ordinary actions. There is an immense contrast in this respect between the doings of the astronomer who, on a certain day, hour, and minute, adjusts his instrument to watch an eclipse, and those of the farmer who so arranges his work that he may have hands enough for reaping some time in August or September. The chemist who calculates how many pounds of quicklime will be required to decompose and precipitate all the bicarbonate of lime which the water in a given reservoir contains in a certain percentage, exhibits an adjustment of inner to outer relations incomparably more specific than does the laundress who softens a tubful of hard water by a handful of soda. In their adaptations to external coexistences and sequences, there is a wide difference between the proceedings of ancient besiegers, whose battering-rams were indeterminate in their actions, and those of modern artillery officers, who, by means of a specific quantity of powder, consisting of specific ingredients, in specific proportions, placed in a tube at a specific inclination, send a bomb of specific weight on to a specific object, and cause it to explode at a specific

moment."[1] It only remains to note that the difference in specific accuracy, here illustrated by contrasting the operations of science with those of ordinary knowledge, is equally conspicuous when, on a somewhat wider scale, we contrast the proceedings, both scientific and artistic, of civilized men with the proceedings of the lowest savages. The most ignorant man in New England probably knows in June that winter is just six months distant; the Australian, to whom, as to the civilized child, time appears to go slowly, knows only that it is a long way off. So, too, the crude knives and hammers and the uncouth pottery of primeval men are distinguished alike by their indefiniteness of contour, and by their uselessness in operations which require specific accuracy. And here, as before, in the extreme vagueness and lack of speciality, both in his knowledge and in the actions which are guided by it, the primeval man appears to stand nearer to the highest brutes than to the civilized moderns.

Along with this increase in specialization, entailing greater definiteness of adjustment, there goes on an increase in generalization, involving an increased power of abstraction, of which barely the germs are to be found either in the lowest men or in other highly organized mammals. The inability of savage races to make generalizations involving any abstraction is sufficiently proved by the absence or extreme paucity of abstract expressions in their languages. As Mr. Farrar observes, "The Society-Islanders have words for dog's tail, bird's tail, and sheep's tail, yet no word for tail; the Mohicans have verbs for every kind of cutting, and yet no verb 'to cut.' The Australians have no generic term for fish, bird, or tree. The Malays have no term for tree or herb, yet they have words for fibre, root, tree-crown, stalk, stock, trunk, twig, and shoot. Some American tongues have separate verbs for 'I wish to eat meat,' and 'I wish to eat soup,' but no verb for 'I wish'; and separate words for a blow with

[1] Spencer, op. cit. i. 340.

a sharp and a blow with a blunt instrument, but no abstract word for blow."[1] Between the stage of intellectual progress thus illustrated and that in which an unlimited capacity for generalization produces such words as "individuation" or "equilibration," the contrast is sufficiently obvious; and it fully confirms our theorem, that the amount of intellectual progress achieved since man became human far exceeds that which was needed to transfer him from apehood to manhood.

The increase of the correspondence in complexity, already illustrated incidentally in the treatment of these other aspects of the case, is still further exemplified in the growing complication of the interdependence between science and the arts. When tracing the complexity of correspondence through the lower stages of the evolution of intelligence in the animal kingdom, Mr. Spencer hints that the evolution of the executive faculties displayed in the organs of prehension and locomotion is closely related to that of the directive faculties displayed in the cephalic ganglia and in the organs of sense. The parallelism may be summed up in the statement that in most, if not all, the principal classes of the animal kingdom, the animals with the most perfect prehensile organs are the most intelligent. Thus the cuttle-fish is the most intelligent of mollusks, and the crab similarly stands at the head of crustaceans, while the parrot outranks all other birds alike in sagacity and in power of handling things, and the ape and elephant are, with the exception of man, the most sagacious of mammals.[1] · Of the human race, too, it may be said that, although Anaxagoras was wrong in asserting that brutes would have been men had they had hands, he might safely have asserted that without hands men could never have become human. Now this interdependence of the directive and executive faculties is continued throughout the process of social evolution in the shape of the inter-

[1] *Chapters on Language*, p. 199.
[2] Spencer, op. cit. i. 368—372.

dependence of the sciences and the arts. "We may properly say that, in its higher forms, the correspondence between the organism and its environment is effected by means of supplementary senses and supplementary limbs. . . . . The magnifying-glass adds but another lens to the lenses existing in the eye. The crow-bar is but one more lever attached to the series of levers forming the arm and hand. And the relationship, which is so obvious in these first steps, holds throughout." We may, indeed, go still deeper, and say that science is but an extension of our ordinary sense-perceptions by the aid of reasoning, while art is but an extension of the ordinary function of our muscular system, of expressing our psychical states by means of motion. Hence it is that "each great step towards a knowledge of laws has facilitated men's operations on things; while each more successful operation on things has, by its results, facilitated the discovery of further laws." Hence the sciences and arts, originating together,—as in the cases of "astronomy and agriculture, geometry and the laying out of buildings, mechanics and the weighing of commodities,"—have all along reacted upon each other, in an increasing variety of ways. It is sufficient to mention the reciprocal connections between navigation and astronomy, between geology and mining, between chemistry and all the arts; while telescopes and microscopes illustrate the truth that "there is scarcely an observation now made in science, but what involves the use of instruments supplied by the arts; while there is scarcely an art-process but what involves some of the previsions of science." Just as in organic evolution we find the mutual dependence of the directive and executive faculties ever increasing, so that "complete visual and tactual perceptions are impossible without complex muscular adjustments, while elaborate actions require the constant overseeing of the senses"; so in social evolution we find between science and art an increasing reciprocity "such that each further cognition implies

elaborate operative aid, and each new operation implies sundry elaborate cognitions." I need only add that, in this as in the other aspects of intellectual progress, the increase in complexity of adjustment achieved during the process of social evolution is far greater than that achieved during the immediately preceding stages of the process of organic evolution. Between the ape and the primitive man, with his rude levers and hatchets and his few simple previsions, the difference in complexity of correspondence is obviously less than between the primitive man and the modern, with his steam-hammers and thermo-electric multipliers, and his long list of sciences and sub-sciences, any one of which it would take much more than a lifetime to master in detail.

We have thus passed in review the various aspects of intellectual progress, regarded as a process of adjustment of inner to outer relations, and we have seen that in all the most essential features of this progress there is a wider difference between the civilized man and the lowest savage than between the savage and the ape. It appears that those rare and admirable qualities upon which we felicitate ourselves as marks which absolutely distinguish us from brute animals, have been slowly acquired through long ages of social evolution, and are shared only to a quite insignificant extent by the lowest contemporary races of humanity. As long as we regard things statically, as for ever fixed, we may well imagine an impassable gulf between ourselves and all other forms of organic existence. But as soon as we regard things dynamically, as for ever changing, we are taught that the gulf has been for the most part established during an epoch at the very beginning of which we were zoologically the same that we now are.

The next step in our argument will be facilitated by an inquiry into the common characteristic of the various intellectual differences between the civilized and the primitive man which we have above enumerated. The nature of this

characteristic was hinted at when we were discussing the improvidence of the barbarian. It was observed that the power of distinctly imagining objective relations not present to sense is the most fundamental of the many intellectual differences between the civilized man and the barbarian. Making this statement somewhat wider, we may now safely assert that the entire intellectual superiority of the civilized man over the savage, or of the modern man over the primeval man, is summed up in his superior power of *representing* that which is not present to the senses. For it is not only in what we call providence that this superiority of representation shows itself, but also in all those combinations of present with past impressions which accompany the extension of the correspondence in space and time, and its increase in heterogeneity, definiteness, and coherence. It is his ability to reproduce copies of his own vanished states of consciousness, and of those of his fellows, that enables the civilized man to adjust his actions to sequences occurring at the antipodes. It is this same power of representation which underlies his power of forming abstract and general conceptions. For the peculiarity of abstract conceptions is that "the matter of thought is no longer any one object, or any one action, but a trait common to many"; and it is, therefore, only when a number of distinct objects or relations possessing some common trait can be represented in consciousness that there becomes possible that comparison which results in the abstraction of the common trait as the object of thought. Obviously, then, the greater the power of abstraction and generalization which is observed, the greater is the power of representation which is implied. The case is the same with that definiteness of the intellectual processes which we have noted as distinguishing modern from primitive thinking. For the conception which underlies definiteness of thinking is the conception of *exact likeness*,—a highly abstract conception which can only be framed after the comparison of

numerous represented cases in which degree of likeness is the common trait that is thought about. Hence not only the improvidence of the savage, but likewise the vagueness of his conceptions, his inability to form generalizations involving abstraction, and the limited area covered by his adjustments, are facts which one and all find their ultimate explanation in his relative incapacity for calling up representative states of consciousness.

From this same incapacity results that inflexibility of thought in which the savage resembles the brute, and which is one of the chief proximate causes of his unprogressiveness. "One of the greatest pains to human nature," says Mr. Bagehot, "is the pain of a new idea." This pain, which only to a few of the most highly cultivated minds in the most highly civilized communities has ceased to be a pain and become a pleasure, is to the savage not so much a pain as a numbing or paralyzing shock. To rearrange the elements of his beliefs is for the uncivilized man an almost impossible task. It is not so much that he does not dare to sever some traditional association of ideas which he was taught in childhood, as it is that he is incapable of holding together in thought the clusters of representations with the continuity of which the given association is incompatible. This important point is so ably and succinctly stated by Mr. Spencer, that I cannot do better than to quote his exposition entire. After reminding us that "mental evolution, both intellectual and emotional, may be measured by the degree of remoteness from primitive reflex action," Mr. Spencer observes that "in reflex action, which is the action of nervous structures that effect few, simple, and often-repeated coordinations, the sequent nervous state follows irresistibly the antecedent nervous state; and does this not only for the reason that the discharge follows a perfectly permeable channel, but also for the reason that no alternative channel exists. From this stage, in which the psychical life is automatically restrained

within the narrowest limits, up through higher stages in which increasing nervous complexities give increasing varieties of actions and possibilities of new combinations, the process continues the same; and it continues the same as we advance from the savage to the civilized man. For where the life furnishes relatively few and little-varied experiences, where the restricted sphere in which it is passed yields no sign of the multitudinous combinations of phenomena that occur elsewhere, the thought follows irresistibly one or other of the few channels which the experiences have made for it, —cannot be determined in some other direction for want of some other channel. But as fast as advancing civilization brings more numerous experiences to each man, as well as accumulations of other men's experiences, past and present, the ever-multiplying connections of ideas that result imply ever-multiplying possibilities of thought. The convictions throughout a wide range of cases are rendered less fixed. Other causes than those which are usual become conceivable; other effects can be imagined; and hence there comes an increasing modifiability of opinion. This modifiability of opinion reaches its extreme in those most highly cultured persons whose multitudinous experiences include many experiences of errors discovered, and whose representativeness of thought is so far-reaching that they habitually call to mind the various possibilities of error, as constituting a general reason for seeking new evidence and subjecting their conclusions to revision.

"If we glance over the series of contrasted modes of thinking which civilization presents, beginning with the savage who, seized by the fancy that something is a charm or an omen, thereafter continues firmly fixed in that belief, and ending with the man of science whose convictions, firm where he is conscious of long-accumulated evidence having no exception, are plastic where the evidence though abundant is not yet overwhelming, we see how an increase in

freedom of thought goes along with that higher representativeness accompanying further mental evolution."[1]

If now we inquire for a moment into the causes of this higher representativeness of civilized thinking, we shall see most beautifully exemplified the way in which intellectual progress, as it goes on in the human race, is determined by social evolution. Intellectual progress is indeed a cause as well as a consequence of the evolution of society; but amid the dense entanglement of causes and effects our present purpose requires us to single out especially the dependence of progress in representativeness upon social complexity, since herein will be found the secret of the mental pre-eminence of civilized man. Now the integration of small tribes into larger and more complex social aggregates, which is the fundamental phenomenon in civilization, tends directly to heighten representativeness of thinking by widening and varying the experiences of the members of society. The member of a savage tribe must think indefinitely, concretely, rigidly, improvidently, because his intellectual experiences are so few in number and so monotonous in character. Increase in social complexity renders possible, or indeed directly produces, fresh associations of ideas in greater and greater variety and abundance, so that the decomposition and recombination of thoughts involved in abstraction and generalization is facilitated; and along with this, the definiteness and the plasticity of thought is increased, and the contents of the mind become representative in higher and higher degrees. Thus in every way it is brought before us that sociality has been the great agent in the achievement of man's intellectual pre-eminence, and that it has operated by widening and diversifying human experience, or in other words by increasing the number, remoteness, and heterogeneity of the environing relations to which each individual's actions have had to be adjusted. An inquiry into the

[1] Spencer, op. cit. ii. 524.

genesis of sociality will therefore best show us how the chasm which divides man intellectually from the brute is to be crossed.

But before we proceed to this somewhat lengthy and circuitous inquiry, we may profitably contemplate under a new aspect the intellectual difference which we have assigned as the fundamental one between civilized and primeval man. We have observed that the intellectual superiority of man over brute and of the civilized man over the barbarian essentially consists in a greater capacity for mentally representing objects and relations remote from sense. And we have insisted upon the point that in this capacity of representation the difference between the highest and lowest specimens of normal humanity known to us far exceeds the difference between the lowest men and the highest apes. Now in closest connection with these conclusions stands the physical fact that the chief structural difference between man and ape, as also between civilized and uncivilized man, is the difference in size and complexity of cerebrum. The cerebrum is the organ especially set apart for the compounding and recompounding of impressions that are not immediately sensory. The business of coordinating immediately presentative impressions is performed by the medulla and other subordinate centres. The cerebrum is especially the organ of that portion of psychical life which is entirely representative.[1] Obviously, then, the progress to higher and higher representativeness ought to be accompanied by a well-marked growth of the cerebrum relatively to the other parts of the nervous system. Now, in the light of the present argument, how significant is the fact that the cranial capacity of the modern Englishman surpasses that of the aboriginal non-Aryan Hindu by a difference of sixty-eight cubic inches,[2] while between this Hindu skull and the skull of the gorilla the difference

[1] See above, p. 137.
[2] Lyell, *Antiquity of Man*, p. 84.

in capacity is but eleven cubic inches! That is to say, the difference in volume of brain between the highest and the lowest man is at least six times as great as the difference between the lowest man and the highest ape. And if we were to take into the account the differences in structural complexity, as indicated by the creasing and furrowing of the brain-surface, we should obtain a yet more astonishing contrast. Yet, powerfully as this anatomical fact confirms the position we have all along been upholding, its full value will not be apparent if we are so dazzled by it as to overlook the significance of the lesser difference between the gorilla and the aboriginal inhabitant of India. As the Duke of Argyll very properly observes, we do right in setting a higher value in classification upon the eleven inches which intervene between the gorilla and the Hindu than upon the sixty-eight inches which intervene between the Hindu and the Englishman. For "the significance set by the facts of nature upon that difference of eleven cubic inches . . . . is the difference between an irrational brute confined to some one climate and to some limited area of the globe,—which no outward conditions can modify or improve,—and a being equally adapted to the whole habitable world, with powers, however undeveloped, of comparison, of reflection, of judgment, of reason, with a sense of right and wrong, and with all these capable of accumulated acquisition, and therefore of indefinite advance." Though somewhat exaggerated in what it denies to the brute, and much more in what it claims for the aboriginal man, this statement contains a kernel of truth which is of value for our present purpose, and which is further illustrated by the fact that a minimum of brain-substance "is constantly and uniformly associated with all the other anatomical peculiarities of man. Below that minimum the whole accompanying structure undergoes far more than a corresponding change,—even the whole change between the lowest savage and the highest ape. Above that minimum, all

subsequent variations in quantity are accompanied by no changes whatever in physical structure."[1] Here again, though the antithesis is a little too absolutely stated, we have set before us a real distinction. Up to a certain point, the brain and the rest of the body are alike alterable by natural selection and such other agencies as may be concerned in the slow modification of organisms. But when the brain has reached a certain point in size and complexity, the rest of the body ceases to change, save in a few slight particulars, and the agencies concerned in forwarding the process of evolution seem to confine themselves to the brain, and especially to the cerebrum,—the result being marked psychical development, unattended by any notable physical alteration. Here we have reached a fact of prime importance. We may grant to the Duke of Argyll that when those eleven additional cubic inches of brain had been acquired, some kind of a Rubicon had been crossed, and a new state of things inaugurated. What was that Rubicon?

The answer has been furnished by Mr. Wallace, and must rank as one of the most brilliant contributions ever yet made to the Doctrine of Evolution. Since inferior animals respond chiefly by physical changes to changes in their environment, natural selection deals chiefly with such changes, to the visible modification of their bodily structure. In the case of sheep or bears, for instance, increased cold can only select for preservation the individuals most warmly coated; or if a race of lions, which has hitherto subsisted upon small and sluggish ruminants until these have been nearly exterminated, is at last obliged to attack antelopes and buffaloes, natural selection can only preserve the swiftest and strongest or most ferocious lions. But when an animal has once appeared, endowed with sufficient intelligence to chip a stone tool and hurl a weapon, natural selection will take advantage of variations in this intelligence, to the comparative neglect of purely physical

[1] Duke of Argyll, *Primeval Man*, pp. 57—64.

variations. Communities whose members are best able to meet by intelligent contrivances the changes in the environment will prevail over other communities, and will also be less easily destroyed by physical catastrophes. Still more strikingly must this superior availability of variations in intelligence be exemplified, when the intelligence has progressed so far as to sharpen spears, to use rude bows, to dig pitfalls, to cover the body with leaves or skins, and to strike fire by rubbing sticks, according to the Indian version of the myth of Prometheus.

So soon, in short, as the intelligence of an animal has, through ages of natural selection and direct adaptation, become so considerable that a slight variation in it is of more use to the animal than any variation in physical structure, then such variations will be more and more constantly selected, while purely physical variations, being of less vital importance to the species, will be relatively more and more neglected. Thus, while the external appearance of such an animal, and the structure of his internal nutritive and muscular apparatus, may vary but little in many ages, his cerebral structure will vary with comparative rapidity, entailing a more or less rapid variation in intellectual and emotional attributes.

Here we would seem to have the key to the singular contrast in the relations of man to contemporary anthropoid apes. We may now understand why man differs so little, in general physical structure and external appearance, from the chimpanzee and gorilla, while, with regard to the special point of cerebral structure and its correlative intelligence, he differs so vastly from these, his nearest living congeners, and the most sagacious of animals save himself. Coupled with what we now know concerning the immense antiquity of the human race, Mr. Wallace's brilliant suggestion goes far to bridge over the interval, which formerly seemed so impracticable, between brute and man. If we

take the thousands of centuries during which the human race has covered both the eastern and the western hemispheres, and compare with them the entire duration of recorded human history, we shall have set before us a profitable subject of reflection. *Since the period during which man has possessed sufficient intelligence to leave a traditionary record of himself is but an infinitesimal fraction of the period during which he has existed upon the earth, it is but fair to conclude that, during those long ages of which none but a geologic record of his existence remains, he was slowly* ACQUIRING *that superior intelligence which now so widely distinguishes him from all other animals.*[1] Throughout an enormous period of time, his brain-structure and its correlated intellectual and emotional functions must have been constantly modified both by natural selection and by direct adaptation, while his outward physical appearance has undergone few modifications; and of these the most striking would seem to be directly or indirectly consequent upon the cerebral changes.[2]

[1] The reader will not fail to note that, even were the question otherwise left open, after the conclusive evidence summarized in chapter ix., this point by itself is a point of truly enormous weight in favour of the theory of man's descent from some lower animal. Upon the theory that the human race was created by a special miraculous act, its long duration in such utter silence is a meaningless, inexplicable fact; whereas, upon the derivation theory, it is just what might be expected.

[2] To the general observer, as to the anatomist, the most notable points of difference between civilized and uncivilized man, as well as between man and the chimpanzee or gorilla, are the differences in the size of the jaws and the inclination of the forehead. The latter difference is directly consequent upon increase of intelligence; and the former is indirectly occasioned by the same circumstance. For the diminution of the jaws, entailed by civilization, is, no doubt, primarily due to disuse; and the disuse is occasioned partly by difference in food, and partly by the employment of tools, and the consequent increased reliance upon the hands as prehensile organs. All these circumstances are the result of increased intelligence. And in addition to this, it is probable that increased frontal development has directly tended, by correlation of growth, to diminish the size of the jaws, as well as to push forward the bridge of the nose. To the increased reliance upon the hands as prehensile organs—a circumstance which we have seen to be in an especial degree characteristic of developing intelligence—is probably also due the complete attainment of the erect position of the body, already partially obtained by the anthropoid apes. Cerebral development thus accounts for all the conspicuous physical peculiarities of man except his bare skin,—a phenomenon for which no satisfactory explanation has yet been suggested.

It is a corollary from the foregoing considerations, that no race of organisms can in future be produced through the agency of natural selection and direct adaptation, which shall be zoologically distinct from, and superior to, the human race. As the same causes which physically modify lower species have, for countless ages, modified man directly and greatly in intelligence and only indirectly and slightly in physical constitution, it follows that mankind is destined to advance during future ages in psychical attributes, but is likely to undergo only slight changes in outward appearance. It is by the coordination of intellectual and moral relations that man maintains himself in equilibrium with the physical, intellectual, and moral relations arising in his ever-changing environment. And hence in the future, as in the recent past, the dominant fact in the career of humanity is not physical modification, but CIVILIZATION.

Here we are brought by a new route to the verge of that theory of civilization which I have sought to elucidate in the preceding chapters. We have touched upon a grand truth, of which it would be difficult to overrate the importance. For we can now admit—not as a concession to Mr. St. George Mivart, but as a legitimate result of our own method of inquiry—that when "the totality of man's being" is taken into the account, the difference between ape and mushroom is less important than the difference between ape and man. And without conceding aught to that superlative nonsense known as the "doctrine of special creations," we may admit, with the Duke of Argyll, that the eleven cubic inches of brain-space, by which the aboriginal Hindu surpasses the gorilla, have a higher value, for purposes of classification, than the sixty-eight cubic inches by which the modern Englishman surpasses the Hindu. We now see what kind of a Rubicon it was which was crossed when those eleven cubic inches of brain (or even when four or five of them) had been gained. The crossing of the Rubicon was the

point at which natural selection began to confine itself chiefly to variations in psychical manifestation. The ape-like progenitor of man, in whom physical and psychical changes had gone on *pari passu* for countless æons, until he had reached the grade of intelligence implied by the possession of a brain four or five inches more capacious than that of the gorilla, had now, as we may suppose, obtained a brain upon which could be devolved, to a greater and greater extent, the task of maintaining relations with the environment. Then began a new chapter in the history of the evolution of life. Henceforward the survival of the fittest, in man's immediate ancestry, was the survival of the cerebrums best able to form representative combinations. The agencies which had hitherto been at work in producing an organic form endowed with rare physical capacities, now began steadfastly to labour in producing a mind capable to a greater and greater extent of ideally resuscitating and combining relations not present to the senses.

But immense as was the step thus achieved in advance, the progress from brute to man was not yet accomplished. As we have already shown, the circumstances which by widening and diversifying experience have mainly contributed to heighten man's faculty of representativeness, have been for the most part circumstances attendant upon man's sociality, or the capacity of individuals for aggregating into communities of increasing extent and complexity. Here we become involved in considerations relating to the emotions as well as to the intelligence. The capacity for sustaining the various relationships implied by the existence of a social aggregate—whether in the case of a primeval family community or of a modern nation—cannot be explained without taking into the account the genesis of those moral feelings by the possession of which man has come to differ from the highest brutes even more conspicuously than by his purely intellectual achievements. The task now before us, therefore, is to

explain the genesis of the moral feelings which lie at the bottom of sociality in the human race; and with reference to this question I shall presently have a suggestion to offer, which will be found as serviceable as it is interesting and novel. Let us for the moment, however, consider the implications of some of the current ethical theories, and especially let us examine the scientific basis of what is too crudely designated as Utilitarianism.

CHAPTER XXII.

GENESIS OF MAN, MORALLY.

THERE are two things, said Kant, which fill me with awe because of their sublimity,—the starry heavens above us, and the moral law within us. From the modern point of view there is interest as well as instruction to be found in the implied antithesis. While in the study of the stellar universe we contemplate the process of evolution on a scale so vast that reason and imagination are alike baffled in the effort to trace out its real significance, and we are overpowered by the sense of the infinity that surrounds us; on the other hand, in the study of the moral sense we contemplate the last and noblest product of evolution which we can ever know,—the attribute latest to be unfolded in the development of psychical life, and by the possession of which we have indeed become as gods, knowing the good and the evil. The theorems of astronomy and the theorems of ethics present to us the process of evolution in its extremes of extension and of intension respectively. For although upon other worlds far out in space there may be modes of existence immeasurably transcending Humanity, yet these must remain unknowable by us. And while this possibility should be allowed its due weight in restraining us from the vain endeavour to formulate the infinite and eternal Sustainer

of the universe in terms of our own human nature, as if the highest symbols intelligible to us were in reality the highest symbols, nevertheless it can in no way influence or modify our science. To us the development of the noblest of human attributes must ever remain the last term in the stupendous series of cosmic changes, of which the development of planetary systems is the first term. And our special synthesis of the phenomena of cosmic evolution, which began by seeking to explain the genesis of the earth and its companion worlds, will be fitly concluded when we have offered a theory of the genesis of those psychical activities whose end is to secure to mankind the most perfect fulness of life upon this earth, which is its dwelling-place.

The great philosopher whose remark has suggested these reflections would not, however, have been ready to assent to the interpretation here given. Though Kant was one of the chief pioneers of the Doctrine of Evolution, having been the first to propose and to elaborate in detail the theory of the nebular origin of planetary systems, yet the conception of a continuous development of life in all its modes, physical and psychical, was not sufficiently advanced, in Kant's day, to be adopted into philosophy. Hence in his treatment of the mind, as regards both intelligence and emotion, Kant took what may be called a statical view of the subject; and finding in the adult civilized mind, upon the study of which his systems of psychology and ethics were founded, a number of organized moral intuitions and an organized moral sense, which urges men to seek the right and shun the wrong, irrespective of utilitarian considerations of pleasure and pain, he proceeded to deal with these moral intuitions and this moral sense as if they were ultimate facts, incapable of being analyzed into simpler emotional elements. Now as the following exposition may look like a defence of utilitarianism, it being really my intention to show that utilitarianism in the deepest and widest sense is the ethical

philosophy imperatively required by the facts, it is well to state, at the outset, that the existence of a moral sense and moral intuitions in civilized man is fully granted. It is admitted that civilized man possesses a complex group of emotions, leading him to seek the right and avoid the wrong, without any reference to considerations of utility; and I disagree entirely with those utilitarian disciples of Locke, who would apparently refer these ethical emotions to the organization of experiences of pleasure and pain in the case of each individual. So long as the subject is contemplated from a statical point of view, so long as individual experience is studied without reference to ancestral experience, the follower of Kant can always hold his ground against the follower of Locke, in ethics as well as in psychology. When the Kantian asserts that the intuitions of right and wrong, as well as the intuitions of time and space, are independent of experience, he occupies a position which is impregnable, so long as the organization of experiences through successive generations is left out of the discussion. But already, on two occasions of supreme importance, we have found the Doctrine of Evolution leading us to a common ground upon which the disciples of Kant and the disciples of Locke can dwell in peace together. We have seen that the experience-test and the inconceivability-test of truth are, when deeply considered, but the obverse faces of the same thing. We have seen that there is a stand-point from which the experience-theory and the intuition-theory of knowledge may be regarded as mutually supplementing each other. We shall presently see, in like manner, that the so-called doctrine of utilitarianism and the doctrine of moral intuitions are by no means so incompatible with one another as may at first appear. As soon as we begin to study the subject dynamically, everything is shown in a new light. Admitting the truth of the Kantian position, that there exists in us a

moral sense for analyzing which our individual experience does not afford the requisite data, and which must therefore be regarded as ultimate for each individual, it is nevertheless open to us to inquire into the emotional antecedents of this organized moral sense as exhibited in ancestral types of psychical life. The inquiry will result in the conviction that the moral sense is not ultimate, but derivative, and that it has been built up out of slowly organized experiences of pleasures and pains.

But before we can proceed directly upon the course thus marked out, it is necessary that we should determine what are meant by pleasures and pains. What are the common characteristics, on the one hand, of the states of consciousness which we call pleasures, and, on the other hand, of the states of consciousness which we call pains? According to Sir William Hamilton, "pleasure is a reflex of the spontaneous and unimpeded exertion of a power of whose energy we are conscious; pain is a reflex of the overstrained or repressed exertion of such a power." That this theory, which is nearly identical with that of Aristotle, is inadequate to account for all the phenomena of pleasure and pain, has been, I think, conclusively proved by Mr. Mill. With its complete adequacy, however, we need not now concern ourselves; as we shall presently see that a different though somewhat allied statement will much better express the facts in the case. Hamilton's statement, however inadequate, is illustrated by a number of truths which for our present purpose are of importance. A large proportion of our painful states of consciousness are attendant upon the inaction, or what Hamilton less accurately calls the "repressed exertion," of certain organic functions. According to the character of the functions in question, these painful states are known as cravings or yearnings. Inaction of the alimentary canal, and that molecular inaction due to deficiency of water in the system, are attended by feelings of hunger and thirst, which

vary from slight discomfort to intense agony according as the inaction is prolonged. Of kindred character are the acquired cravings for tobacco, alcohol, and other narcotics. Inaction of the muscles causes great discomfort in children who are compelled to sit still, and grown persons feel similar annoyance when the enforced stillness is long enough kept up. Prisoners kept in dark cells soon feel an intense craving for light, which in time becomes scarcely less intolerable than raging hunger. A similar explanation suffices for the emotional yearnings involved in home-sickness, ennui, deprivation of the approval of our fellow-creatures, or in separation from our favourite pursuits. All these painful states are due to the enforced inaction of certain feelings, social or æsthetic. And in similar wise, as Mr. Spencer observes, the bitter grief attendant upon the death of a friend results from the ideal representation of a future in which certain groups of habitual emotions must remain inactive or unsatisfied by outward expression.

The objection may be made that all this is but an elaborate way of saying that certain pains result from the deprivation of certain pleasures. But since such an objection, in its very statement, recognizes that certain kinds of unimpeded activity, physical or psychical, are pleasures, it need not disturb us, or lead us to under-estimate the value of Hamilton's suggestion. Let us note next that excessive action of any function, equally with deficient action, is attended by pain. Local pain results from intensified sensations of heat, light, sound, or pressure; and though it may be in some cases true, as Mr. Spencer asserts, that sweet tastes are not rendered positively disagreeable by any degree of intensity,[1] the alleged fact seems quite contrary to my own experience, and to that of several other persons whom I have questioned. Other local pains, as in inflammation and sundry other forms of disease, are apparently due to increased molecular activity in

[1] Spencer, *Principles of Psychology*, vol. i. p. 276.

the parts affected. And the feelings of pain or discomfort both local and systemic, attendant upon over-exercise, over-eating, or excessive use of a narcotic, are to be similarly explained.

Thus we may say that pleasure, generally speaking, is "the concomitant of an activity which is neither too small nor too great," and we get at the significance of the Epicurean maxim, *μηδὲν ἄγαν*. But this doctrine, as already hinted, is by no means complete. For, as Mr. Mill and Mr. Spencer ask, "What constitutes a medium activity? What determines that lower limit of pleasurable action below which there is craving, and that higher limit of pleasurable action above which there is pain?" And furthermore, how happen there to be certain feelings (as among tastes and odours) which are disagreeable in all degrees of intensity, and others that are agreeable in all degrees of intensity? The answer, as Mr. Spencer shows, is to be sought in the study of the past conditions under which feelings have been evolved.

If the tentacles of a polyp are rudely struck by some passing or approaching body, the whole polyp contracts violently in such a manner as to throw itself slightly out of the way; but if a fragment of assimilable food, floating by, happens to touch one of the tentacles gently, the tentacle grasps it and draws it slowly down to the polyp's digestive sac. Now between these contrasted actions there is no such psychical difference as accompanies the similarly contrasted human actions of taking food and ducking the head to avoid a blow; for the polyp's contractions, being simply reflex actions of the lowest sort, are unattended by states of consciousness, either agreeable or disagreeable. Nevertheless there is one respect in which the two cases perfectly agree. In both cases there is a seeking of that which is beneficial to the organism, and a shunning of that which is injurious. And while, in the case of the polyp, there is no conscious pleasure or pain, we may fairly surmise that, as soon as any

animal's psychical life becomes sufficiently complex to be attended by distinct states of consciousness, the presence of that which is beneficial is accompanied by a pleasurable feeling which leads to the seeking of it, while the presence of that which is injurious is accompanied by a painful feeling which leads to the shunning of it. Our surmise is strengthened as we reconsider the human actions lately enumerated, and observe that the abnormal activity of a function, either in deficiency or in excess, is injurious, while the normal activity of a function in balance with its companion functions is beneficial. As Mr. Spencer says, "in a mutually dependent set of organs having a consensus of functions, the very existence of a special organ having its special function, implies that the absence of its function must cause disturbance of the consensus,—implies too, that its function may be raised to an excess which must cause disturbance of the consensus, —implies, therefore, that maintenance of the consensus goes along with a medium degree of its function." In accordance with this view, we may note that hunger and thirst are feelings attendant upon a kind of functional inaction which is harmful, and even fatal if prolonged; that inaction or excessive action of the muscles is injurious as well as painful; that the intense heat and cold, and the violent pressure, which cause distress, will also cause more or less injury, and may cause death; that the discomfort following repletion and narcosis is the concomitant of a state of things which, if kept up, must end in dyspepsia, or other forms of disease, entailing usually a permanent lowering of nutrition; and that the intense sounds and lights which distress the ear and eye also tend to produce deafness and blindness. And in like manner, the enforced inaction of the social and æsthetic feelings, which is attended by mental discomfort, is also attended in the long run by a diminution of the fulness and completeness of psychical life, which in extreme cases may result in consumption, insanity, or narcotic craving.

It would seem, therefore, that the class of cases upon which Hamilton relied will justify an interpretation much deeper than the one which he proposed for them. They will apparently justify us in asserting that pleasure is a state of consciousness accompanying modes of activity which tend to increase the fulness of life of an organism, while pain is a state of consciousness accompanying modes of activity which tend to diminish the fulness of life. Before considering the objections to this doctrine,—which, though at first sight formidable, will disappear on further analysis,—let us note, with Mr. Spencer, that, on the theory of evolution, "races of sentient creatures could have come into existence under no other conditions." Omitting the cases which, in human psychology, are complicated by the foresight of remote or inconspicuous consequences, Mr. Spencer observes that Pleasure is "a feeling which we seek to bring into consciousness and retain there," while Pain is "a feeling which we seek to get out of consciousness and to keep out." Hence it follows that "if the states of consciousness which a creature endeavours to maintain are the correlatives of injurious actions, and if the states of consciousness which it endeavours to expel are the correlatives of beneficial actions, it must quickly disappear, through persistence in the injurious and avoidance of the beneficial." In other words, even supposing a race of animals could come into existence, which should habitually seek baneful actions as pleasurable, and shun useful actions as painful, natural selection would immediately exterminate it. Our supposition is therefore a hibernicism: under the operation of natural selection no such race could ever come into existence. Only those races can exist whose feelings, on the average, result in actions which are in harmony with environing relations. Accordingly we may rest upon a still deeper and firmer basis our doctrine of pleasure and pain, and assert that Pleasure is a state of consciousness accompanying the relatively complete adjust-

ment of inner to outer relations, while Pain is a state of consciousness attendant upon the discordance between inner and outer relations.

We may now consider a class of facts which at first seem inconsistent with the theory, but which in reality serve further to illustrate it. Animals now and then perform self-destructive actions under circumstances which make it difficult to suppose that the performance is not pleasurable. Though the majority of vegetable poisons are disagreeable to the taste, yet this is not always the case; and hence animals have been known to perish after a greedy meal upon some noxious herb. But here, as in the case of the moth which, in Tennyson's phrase, is "shrivelled in a fruitless fire," there is a new relation in the environment for which there is no corresponding adjustment established in the organism. The cases are like that of the child who ignorantly drinks a sweet poison, or satisfies its desire for muscular activity by climbing out of the window. The dynamic theory of life does not imply the pre-existence of internal relations answering to all possible external relations. Were it so, life would be complete from the outset. For new emergencies there have to be new adjustments. Now manifestly if the whole race of moths could be made to live among lighted candles, one of two things must happen: either there must be generated a tendency to avoid the candles, or the race must be exterminated. If an animal migrates to a district where poisonous herbs abound, its existence can be maintained only on one of two conditions: if it be low in intelligence, a disagreeable taste must be generated, so that the noxious food will be instantly rejected, or the odour must become offensive, so that the taste will be forewarned; but if the animal be possessed of high intelligence, like a bird or mammal, it will be enough if the dangerous object is identified by smell or taste, or even by vision or touch, while along with the recognition there occurs an ideal representation of

danger. Hence it is not necessary to the maintenance of a race like mankind that all poisons should be bitter, or that injurious actions, newly tried, should painfully affect any of the senses. The work of making the needful adjustments is thrown largely upon the cerebrum, with its power of forming ideal sequences like those formerly experienced, and of directing action so as to anticipate them. Here, indeed, we come suddenly upon one of the conditions of human progressiveness, as above illustrated.

We can now begin to see why man finds pleasure in so many kinds of activity which are noxious to himself. In no other animal are the failures of adjustment between pleasurable and painful states, and beneficial and hurtful actions, so numerous or so conspicuous as in man. Though in the adjustments upon which the maintenance of life immediately depends, the correspondence is of necessity unimpaired, yet in those less essential adjustments concerned in keeping up the greatest possible fulness of life, there is frequent and lamentable imperfection. Thus,—to take one instance out of a hundred,—we continually see pleasurable states of consciousness associated with hurtful actions in the cases of men who ruin themselves by the use of narcotics. The fact that men, who are so much wiser than brutes, should often persist in conduct unworthy of brute intelligence, has long formed the theme of much sage but fruitless moralizing. By Calvinistic theologians such phenomena were formerly cited in proof of the theory that man is morally the lowest of creatures, having been rendered thoroughly unsound by the eating of the apple in Eden. It is needless to say that science offers a very different explanation. It follows from our inquiry into the causes of organic evolution,[1] that the adjustments which tend to maintain the highest fulness of life can be kept up only by natural selection or by direct equilibration. Now we have already had occasion to notice that in

[1] See above, part ii. chap. xii.

the human race, partly on account of the extreme complexity of its individual organization, partly on account of superadded social conditions, the action of natural selection is to a great extent checked. I do not allude to the fact that the supremely important human sympathies, which have grown up in the course of social evolution, compel us to protect the idle and intemperate, so that, instead of starving, they are "enabled to multiply at the expense of the capable and industrious." For far deeper than this lies the circumstance that "there are so many kinds of superiorities which severally enable men to survive, notwithstanding accompanying inferiorities, that natural selection cannot by itself rectify any particular unfitness; especially if, as usually happens, there are coexisting unfitnesses which all vary independently."[1] In a race of inferior animals a function in excess is quickly reduced by natural selection, because, owing to the universal slaughter, the highest completeness of life possible to a given grade of organization is required for the mere maintenance of life. But under the conditions surrounding human development, a function in excess may remain in excess provided its undue exercise is not such as is incompatible with life. Through countless ages, for example, the feelings which insure the maintenance of the race have been strengthened by natural selection, because of their prime importance to every race. But under the conditions of civilized life, the sexual passion has become a function in excess, which natural selection is powerless to reduce, because, although it is probably the source of more crime and misery than any other excessive function, and therefore detracts more from complete individuation or the fulness of human life than any other, it is nevertheless but seldom incompatible with the maintenance of life. In all such cases, mankind has so many other functions, besides the excessive ones, which enable it to subsist and achieve progress in spite of them, that their reduction to the

[1] Spencer, op. cit. i. 284.

normal standard is left for the slow process of direct equilibration.

The action of direct equilibration, in turn, is greatly complicated, among the progressive races, by the rapid and extensive change of the social environment from age to age. A new set of readjustments needs to be made before the old ones are completed; and the result is that there are always a number of functions somewhat out of balance. When civilization is rapidly progressing, each generation of men is forced into kinds of activity to which the inherited emotional tendencies, and in some cases even the inherited physical constitutions, are not thoroughly adapted. Hence the number and variety of pathological phenomena, both mental and physical, is greater in civilized than in savage communities. As might be expected, the present century, which has witnessed a far more extensive revolution in the modes of human activity than any previous age, exhibits numerous instances of these minor failures of adjustment. To take the most conspicuous example,—the progress of science and industry during the past three generations have raised the average standard of comfortable living so greatly and so suddenly, that to attain this standard an excessive strain is put upon men's powers. In many respects, it is harder to live to-day than it was a hundred years ago. As a general rule we are overworked until late in life, in the mere effort to secure the means of maintaining life. Not only does this continual overwork entail a serious disturbance of the normal equilibrium between pleasures and pains and the correlative benefits and injuries, since it involves the undue exertion of certain faculties and the undue repression of others, but there is further disturbance due to the specific character of the overwork. Throughout a very large and constantly increasing portion of the community, the excessive labour is intellectual labour; the abnormal strain comes upon the nervous system. The task of maintaining the correspondence with environing

relations, which in the course of organic evolution has been entrusted more and more largely to the nervous system, and which in the course of social evolution has been thrown more and more upon the cerebrum, has during the past hundred years been thrown upon the cerebrum to a formidable extent. The community, therefore, is suffering not simply from overwork, but from excessive brain-work, in the shape of inordinate thinking and planning, and inordinate anxiety. "Further, it is to be observed that many of the industrial activities which the struggle for existence has thrust on the members of modern societies, are in-door activities,—activities not only not responded to by the feelings inherited from aboriginal men, but in direct conflict with those more remotely inherited and deeply organized feelings which prompt a varied life in the open air." Hence manifold disturbance. "A sedentary occupation pursued for years in a confined air, regardless of protesting sensations, brings about a degenerate physical state in which the inherited feelings are greatly out of harmony with the superinduced requirements of the body. Desired foods, originally appropriate, become indigestible. An air pleasure-giving by its freshness to those in vigour, brings colds and rheumatisms. Amounts of exertion and excitement naturally healthful and gratifying are found injurious. All which evils, due though they are to continued disregard of the guidance of inherited feelings, come eventually to be mistaken for proofs that the guidance of inherited feelings is worthless."[1]

Further to pursue this interesting subject would be to convert a set of illustrations, already too elaborately stated, into an unmanageable digression. Summing up the results now obtained, we see that natural selection, acting less rigidly under the limitations imposed by social evolution, fails to

[1] Spencer, op. cit. i. 282, 283. Light is thus thrown upon the misuse of alcohol and tobacco,—one of the most conspicuous of the cases in which men's physical appetites prompt to actions that are injurious.

reduce functions that are in excess, and leaves them to be reduced by direct equilibration. The process is accordingly slow, since direct adaptation to a rapidly changing environment is attended by the appearance of minor unfitnesses which further complicate the emotional disturbance, and disarrange the normal relations between incentives and actions. We need not, therefore, be surprised at the fact that men often find pleasure in detrimental activities; nor need we indorse the Puritanic or ascetic theory, suggested partly by the contemplation of this fact, "that painful actions are beneficial and pleasurable actions detrimental." For if this were to any considerable extent the case, sentient life would inevitably disappear from the face of the earth. The cases which we have cited belong to ethical pathology. And just as pathologic phenomena do not invalidate the laws of physiology, just as the dynamic theory of life is not invalidated by the fact that mal-adjustments are continually met with, so neither do cases of moral disease invalidate the corollary which inevitably follows from the Doctrine of Evolution, "that pleasures are the incentives to life-supporting acts, and pains the deterrents from life-destroying acts."

We are now prepared to deal with the phenomena of Right and Wrong, and to notice how they become distinguished from the phenomena of Pleasure and Pain. Though the foregoing discussion forms the basis for a general doctrine of morality, it is nevertheless an inadequate basis, until properly supplemented. The existence of a moral sense has purposely been as far as possible unrecognized; for I believe that in dealing with these complex subjects, little can be accomplished, save on the plan of separately cornering the various elements in the problem, and flooring them one by one. Any philosophy of ethics, therefore, which might be founded upon the preceding analysis, could be nothing more than a theory of Hedonism, recognizing no other incentive to proper action than the pleasing of one's self. By one of the innumerable

tricks which the misuse of current words plays with the understanding, the so-called utilitarian theory has been, and still is, not unfrequently identified with this kind of hedonistic philosophy, which is in truth its very antipodes. The error is much like that involved in the accusation of fatalism, commonly hurled at those who maintain the obvious and harmless assertion that moral actions conform to law. But the difference, comprising the entire difference between the noblest self-sacrifice and the meanest self-fondling, is as follows: In our theory of pleasure and pain, which if taken as ultimate would be hedonism, the well-being of the community has been as far as possible omitted from the account. Wherever I have introduced references to social phenomena, I have considered them only in their effects upon the fulness of life of the individual. In dealing with the incentives to action in a race of brute animals, the foregoing considerations would be sufficient. But in the so-called utilitarian theory as it is now to be expounded, the well-being of the community, even when incompatible with that of the individual, is the all-important consideration. While the actions deemed pleasurable are those which conduce to the fulness of life of the Individual, the actions deemed right are those which conduce to the fulness of life of the Community. And while the actions deemed painful are those which detract from the fulness of life of the Individual, the actions deemed wrong are those which detract from the fulness of life of the Community. According to utilitarianism, therefore, as here expounded, the conduct approved as moral is the disinterested service of the community, and the conduct stigmatized as immoral is the selfish preference of individual interests to those of the community. And bearing in mind that the community, which primevally comprised only the little tribe, has by long-continued social integration come to comprise the entire human race, we have the ultimate theorem of the utilitarian philosophy, as properly understood, that actions morally right are those which are

beneficial to Humanity, while actions morally wrong are those which are detrimental to Humanity.

Are we to maintain, then, that when we approve of certain actions, we do so because we consciously and deliberately reason out, in each particular case, the conclusion that these actions are beneficial to mankind? By no means. Not only is it that the highest science cannot always enable us to say surely of a given action that it is useful to mankind, but it is also that we do not stop to apply science to the matter at all. We approve of certain actions and disapprove of certain actions quite instinctively. We shrink from stealing or lying as we shrink from burning our fingers; and we no more stop to frame the theorem that stealing and lying, if universally practised, must entail social dissolution and a reversion to primeval barbarism, than we stop to frame the theorem that frequent burning of the fingers must entail an incapacity for efficient manual operations. In short, there is in our psychical structure a moral sense which is as quickly and directly hurt by wrong-doing or the idea of wrong-doing as our tactile sense is hurt by stinging.

Shall we, then, maintain, as a corollary from the Doctrine of Evolution, that our moral sense is due to the organic registration, through countless ages, of deliberate inferences that some actions benefit Humanity, while others injure it? Shall we say that the primeval savage began by reasoning his way to the conclusion that if treachery were to be generally allowed, within the limits of the tribe, then the tribe must succumb in the struggle for existence to other tribes in which treachery was forbidden; and that, by a gradual organization of such inductions from experience, our moral sense has slowly arisen? This position is no more tenable than the other. Mr. Richard Hutton and Mr. St. George Mivart would seem to have attributed to Mr. Spencer some such doctrine. But Mr. Spencer is too profound a thinker to ignore so completely the conditions under which

permanent emotional states are generated. Our moral sense has arisen in no such way. But to understand the way in which it has arisen, we must recur to our fundamental problem, and seek for the conditions which first enabled social evolution, as distinguished from organic evolution, to start upon its career.

It is now time to propose an answer to the question, already twice suggested and partly answered, How did social evolution originate? Starting from the researches of Sir Henry Maine, which are supported by those of Messrs. Tylor, M'Lennan, and Lubbock, we have come to the conclusion that it originated when families, temporarily organized among all the higher gregarious mammals, became in the case of the highest mammal permanently organized. Starting from the deductions of Mr. Wallace, we have seen reason for believing that civilization originated when in the highest mammal variations in intelligence became so much more important than variations in physical structure that they began to be seized upon by natural selection to the relative exclusion of the latter. In the permanent family we have the germ of society. In the response to outer relations by psychical changes, which almost completely subordinate physical changes, we have the germ of civilization. Let us now take a step in advance of previous speculation,[1] and see what can be done by combining these two theorems, so that the permanent organization of families and the complex intelligence of the highest mammal will appear in their causal relations to each other.

Many mammals are gregarious, and gregariousness implies

[1] The latest writer upon these subjects is inclined to give up the problem as insoluble. "I at least find it difficult to conceive of men, at all like the present men, unless existing in something like families, that is, in groups avowedly connected, at least on the mother's side, and probably always with a vestige of connection, more or less, on the father's side, and unless these groups were, like many animals, gregarious, under a leader more or less fixed. It is almost beyond imagination how man, as we know man, could by any sort of process have gained this step in civilization."—Bagehot, *Physics and Politics*, p. 136.

incipient power of combination and of mutual protection. But gregariousness differs from sociality by the absence of definitive family relationships, except during the brief and intermittent periods in which there are helpless offspring to be protected. Now it might be maintained that the complex intelligence of the highest mammal led him vaguely to recognize the advantage of associating in more and more permanent groups for the sake of mutual protection. From this point of view Mr. Darwin argues that men were originally a race of weak and mild creatures like chimpanzees, and not a race of strong and ferocious creatures like gorillas, and were accordingly forced to combine because unable to defend themselves singly. It is undeniable that man is, relatively to his size, a weak animal; and there is much value in Mr. Darwin's suggestion in so far as it goes to explain the origin of gregariousness among those primates who were the ancestors of man. Nevertheless, it can hardly be said to explain Sociality as distinguished from Gregariousness. It may also be argued that the superior sagacity even of the lowest savage makes him quite a formidable antagonist to animals much more powerful than himself. Besides, the study of savage life brings out results at variance with the notion of man's primitive gentleness. A strong case might be made in support of the statement that uncivilized man is an extremely ferocious animal, and that among savage races, which certainly differ very notably in natural ferocity of disposition, the most ferocious tribes are often the most likely to become dominant and assist social integration by subduing other tribes. The earliest annals of the highest of human races, the Aryan, certainly bear witness to extreme ferocity, checked and determined in its direction by a moral sense further developed than that of savages. While recognizing, therefore, the value of Mr. Darwin's suggestion, so far as it goes, I believe that the true explanation lies much further beneath the surface.

It will be remembered that, in treating of the parallel evolution of the mind and the nervous system,[1] it was shown that the increase of intelligence in complexity and speciality involves a lengthening of the period during which the nervous connections involved in ordinary adjustments are becoming organized. Even if the physical interpretation there given should turn out to be inadequate, the fact remains undeniable, that while the nervous connections accompanying a simple intelligence are already organized at birth, the nervous connections accompanying a complex intelligence are chiefly organized after birth. Thus there arise the phenomena of infancy, which are non-existent among those animals whose psychical actions are purely reflex and instinctive. Infancy, psychologically considered, is the period during which the nerve-connections and correlative ideal associations necessary for self-maintenance are becoming permanently established. Now this period, which only begins to exist when the intelligence is considerably complex, becomes longer and longer as the intelligence increases in complexity. In the human race it is much longer than in any other race of mammals, and it is much longer in the civilized man than in the savage.[2] Indeed among the educated classes of civilized society, its average duration may be said to be rather more than a quarter of a century, since during all this time those who are to live by brain-work are simply acquiring the capacity to do so, and are usually supported upon the products of parental labour.

It need not be said that, on the general theory of evolution, the passage from the short infancy of other primates to the relatively long infancy witnessed among the lowest contemporary savages, cannot have been a sudden one.[3] But

[1] See above, part ii. chap. xvi.

[2] Possibly there may be a kindred implication in the fact that women attain maturity earlier than men.

[3] In this connection it is interesting to observe that the phenomena of infancy seem to be decidedly more marked in the anthropoid apes than in other non-human primates. At the age of one month the orang-outang begins

a special reason may be assigned why Nature, which never makes long jumps, must have been incapable of making this particular jump. Throughout the animal kingdom the period of infancy is correlated with feelings of parental affection, sometimes confined to the mother, but often shared by the father, as in the case of animals which mate. Where, as among the lower animals, there is no infancy, there is no parental affection. Where the infancy is very short, the parental feeling, though intense while it lasts, presently disappears, and the offspring cease to be distinguished from strangers of the same species. And in general the duration of the feelings which insure the protection of the offspring is determined by the duration of the infancy. The agency of natural selection in maintaining this balance is too obvious to need illustration. Hence, if long infancies could have suddenly come into existence among a primitive race of ape-like men, the race would have quickly perished from inadequate persistence of the parental affections. The prolongation must therefore have been gradual, and the same increase of intelligence to which it was due must also have prolonged the correlative parental feelings, by associating them more and more with anticipations and memories. The concluding phases of this long change may be witnessed in the course of civilization. Our parental affections now endure through life; and while their fundamental instinct is perhaps no stronger than in savages, they are, nevertheless, far more effectively powerful, owing to our far greater power of remembering the past and anticipating the future.

I believe we have now reached a very thorough and satisfactory explanation of the change from Gregariousness to

to learn to walk, holding on to convenient objects of support, like a human infant. Up to this time it lies on its back, tossing about and examining its hands and feet. A monkey at the same age has reached maturity, so far as locomotion and prehension are concerned. See Mr. Wallace's interesting experience with an infant orang-outang, in his *Malay Archipelago*, vol. i. pp. 68—71.

Sociality. Bear in mind that I am not indulging in pure hypothesis. The prolongation of infancy accompanying the development of intelligence, and the correlative extension of parental feelings, are facts established by observation wherever observation is possible. And to maintain that the correlation of these phenomena was kept up during an epoch which is hidden from observation, and can only be known by inference, is to make a genuine induction, involving no other assumption than that the operations of nature are uniform. To him who is still capable of believing that the human race was created by miracle in a single day, with all its attributes, physical and psychical, compounded and proportioned just as they now are, the present inquiry is, of course, devoid of significance. But for the evolutionist there would seem to be no alternative but to accept, when once propounded, the present series of inferences.

For the process here described, when long enough continued, must inevitably differentiate and integrate a herd or troop of gregarious ape-like men into a number of small family communities such as are now found among the lowest savages. The prolonged helplessness of the offspring must keep the parents together for longer and longer periods in successive epochs; and when at last the association is so long kept up that the older children are growing mature while the younger ones still need protection, the family relations begin to become permanent. The parents have lived so long in company, that to seek new companionships involves some disturbance of engrained habits; and meanwhile the older sons are more likely to continue their original association with each other than to establish associations with strangers, since they have common objects to achieve, and common enmities, bequeathed and acquired, with neighbouring families. As the parent dies, the headship of the family thus established devolves upon the oldest, or bravest, or most sagacious male remaining. Thus the little group gradually

becomes a clan, the members of which are united by ties considerably stronger than those which ally them to members of adjacent clans, with whom they may indeed combine to resist the aggressions of yet further outlying clans, or of formidable beasts, but towards whom their feelings are usually those of hostile rivalry. It remains to add, that the family groups thus constituted differ widely in many respects from modern families, and do not afford the materials for an idyllic picture of primeval life. Though always ready to combine against the attack of a neighbouring clan, the members of the group are by no means indisposed to fight among themselves. The sociality is but nascent: infants are drowned, wives are beaten to death, and there are deadly quarrels between brothers. So in modern families evanescent barbarism shows itself in internal quarrels, while nevertheless injury offered from without is resented in common. A more conspicuous difference is the absence of monogamy in the primitive clan. It has been, I think, demonstrated,—and for the evidence in detail I would refer to Sir John Lubbock's excellent treatise on the "Origin of Civilization," and to the learned works of M'Lennan and Tylor,—that in the primitive clan all the women are the wives of all the men. Traces of this state of things, which some of our half-educated "reformers" would fain restore, are found all over the world, both in modern savage communities and in traditional observances preserved by communities anciently civilized. There was also, as Sir Henry Maine has proved, entire community of lands and goods, and the individual possessed no personal rights as against the interests of the clan. And let us note, in conclusion, that this state of things, while chiefly brought about by the process of direct equilibration above described, is just that which natural selection must assist and maintain so long as the incipient community is small and encompassed by dangers.

Thus we cross the chasm which divides animality from hu-

manity, gregariousness from sociality, hedonism from morality, the sense of pleasure and pain from the sense of right and wrong. For note that by the time integration has resulted in the establishment of a permanent family group with definite relationships between the members, the incentives to action in each member of the group have become quite different from what they were in a state of mere gregariousness. Sympathy, or the power of ideally reproducing in one's self the pleasures and pains of another person, is manifested in a rudimentary form by all gregarious animals of moderate intelligence. Not unfrequently, as Mr. Darwin shows, a baboon has been known to risk his life to save that of a comrade; and the higher apes habitually take under their care young orphans of their own species. It is evident that this power of sympathy must be strengthened and further developed when a number of individuals are brought into closer and more enduring relationships, even though these come far short of what, from our modern ethical standard, would be termed loving. Affection in the savage clan is but partially preventive of fiendish cruelty; yet there is an ability in the members to understand each other's feelings, and there is a desire for the approbation of fellow-clansmen. Kinship in blood, as well as community of pursuits and interests, promotes these feelings. Even to-day we can usually understand the mental habits, desires, and repugnances of our own immediate kindred better than we can understand those of other people unrelated to us, even though circumstances may now and then have led us to prefer the society of the latter. We can more readily admire their excellences and condone their faults, for their faults and excellences are likely to be in a measure our own.

Given this rudimentary capacity of sympathy, we can see how family integration must alter and complicate the emotional incentives to action. While the individual may still exercise his brute-like predatory instincts upon strangers and

lower animals, and will, indeed, be more highly approved the more he does so, on the other hand there is a curb upon his exercise of them within the limits of the clan. There is a nascent public opinion which lauds actions beneficial to the clan, and frowns upon actions detrimental to it; though for this it is not necessary that there should be a generalization of the effects of certain actions, any more than a generalization of the effects of hunger is needed to insure the individual's approval of eating. The mere present sense of collective pleasure or pain is enough to organize the complex feeling. For example, when a marauding expedition upon a neighbouring clan is defeated by the cowardice or treachery of one of the party, the offender is perhaps beaten, kicked, or killed. The present sense of collective pain immediately prompts the actions which tend to repress the cowardice or treachery. On the other hand, the pleasurable states which result in all the members of the clan, in common, after an exhibition of successful bravery, immediately generate approval of the man who is brave, along with the desire to imitate him. In short,—to quote Mr. Spencer,—one of the things that come to be strongly associated in the mind of the young savage, with marks of approval, "which are symbolical of pleasures in general, is courage; and one of the things that comes to be associated in his mind with frowns and other marks of enmity, which form his symbol of unhappiness, is cowardice. These feelings are not formed in him because he has reasoned his way to the truth that courage is useful to his tribe, and by implication to himself, or to the truth that cowardice is a cause of evil. In adult life he may, perhaps, see this; but he certainly does not see it at the time when bravery is thus associated in his consciousness with all that is good, and cowardice with all that is bad. Similarly there are produced in him feelings of inclination or repugnance towards other lines of conduct that have become established or interdicted, because they are beneficial

or injurious to the tribe; though neither the young nor the adults know why they have become established or interdicted Instance the praiseworthiness of wife-stealing and the viciousness of marrying within the tribe."[1] In these ways the establishment of permanent family relationships generates new incentives to action, unknown in the previous epoch of mere gregariousness, which must often, and in some instances habitually, overrule the mere animal incentives comprised in personal pleasures and pains. The good of the individual must begin to yield to the good of the community.

Next in order comes the genesis of the feelings of regret and remorse, which are the fundamental ingredients of conscience. This part of the subject has been ably treated by Mr. Darwin, whose chapter on the Moral Sense is one of the most profound and suggestive chapters in his recent work on the "Descent of Man." Mr. Darwin points to the important fact, that, while the incentives to actions beneficial to the community are always steadily in operation, on the other hand the purely selfish impulses, although frequently strong enough to acquire temporary mastery over the others, are nevertheless accompanied by pleasures that are brief in duration and leave behind memories of comparatively slight vividness. Now, when intelligence has progressed to a point where there is some definite memory of particular past actions, the workings of the mind, with reference to conduct, begin to assume a more strictly moral character. Though at the moment of action a man may yield to the desire of gratifying hunger, or revenge, or cupidity, at the cost of violating the rules enforced by social sanctions, yet afterwards, when "past and weaker impressions are contrasted with the ever-enduring social instincts, retribution will surely come. Man will then feel dissatisfied with himself, and will resolve, with more or less force, to act differently for the future. This is conscience; for conscience looks backward and judges past

[1] Spencer, *Recent Discussions*, p. 23.

actions, inducing that kind of dissatisfaction which, if weak, we call regret, and, if severe, remorse."[1]

All these varieties of incentive are next reinforced by incentives of a mysterious and supernatural character. When intelligence has progressed to the point where some curiosity is felt concerning the causes of phenomena,—a point barely reached by the lowest contemporary savages,—mythologies begin to be framed. A mythology is a rudimentary cosmic philosophy; and let me note, in passing, that an uncivilized race must have attained considerable latent philosophic capacity before it can construct a rich mythology,—instance the luxuriant folk-lore of Greece as contrasted with the scanty mythology of savages. Now, the earliest kind of philosophy is fetichism, by which natural phenomena are attributed to the volitions of countless supernatural agencies. What are these agencies? Recent researches have elicited the fact that they are supposed to be the ghosts of the dead ancestors of the tribe. The dead chief, who appears to the savage in dreams, is supposed to rule the winds and floods, and to visit with his wrath those who violate the rules of action established in the tribe.[2] When one of Mr. Darwin's companions, in Tierra del Fuego, shot some birds to preserve as specimens, a Fuegian present exclaimed, "O Mr. Bynoe, rain much, much wind, blow much!" thus indicating his belief that the wasting of food, condemned by tribal rules, would be visited with condign punishment by the tutelar deities of the tribe. "This transfigured form of restraint," says Mr. Spencer, "differing at first but little from the original form, is capable of immense development." As the fetishistic agencies are generalized into the deities of polytheism, and these in time are summed up in a single anthropomorphic deity, there slowly grows up the theory of a hell in which actions condemned by the community will be punished. The complex

[1] Darwin, *Descent of Man*, vol. i. p. 87.
[2] See *Myths and Myth-Makers*, pp. 75, 237.

conceptions of good and evil are thus so widely differentiated from the simpler conceptions of pleasure and pain, that the traces of the original kinship are obscured. This kind of restraint has not ceased to operate upon numbers of civilized men at the present day; and theologians tell us that, if it were removed, there would ensue a moral retrogression. So doubtless there would, if it could be removed prematurely.

Returning to our savage, it must be observed that these combined agencies have enforced upon him an amount of self-restraint, in view of tribal sanctions, which differentiates him widely from any gregarious animal. Savages are not unfrequently capable of extreme devotion and self-sacrifice when the interests of the tribe are at stake: instances are not rare in which they will deliberately choose to be shot rather than betray the plans of their fellow-tribesmen. It is to such cases as these that we must attribute the discrepancies in the accounts of savage morality given by different travellers.[1] If we do not stop to analyze the matter, such instances may seem to prove that the savage is morally on a level with us. But the analysis of countless seemingly inconsistent observations shows that savage virtues are, in general, confined to the clan. The same savage who will suffer torture with equanimity, rather than betray his comrades, is also capable of the most fiendish cruelty and treachery toward the members of another clan. For the very forces which, during long ages, have brought him to the point at which he can sacrifice his own pleasure to the good of the tribe, have also been impressing upon him the meritoriousness of letting loose all his brutal instincts beyond the tribal limits. The savage has no sense of the wickedness of killing, stealing, and lying, in the abstract, or of the

[1] Between different savage races, moreover, there are undoubtedly great differences in emotional characteristics. While some, as the Fijis, are exceptionally ferocious, others, as the Hawaiians and Eskimos, appear to be comparatively gentle and sympathetic.

horrible cruelty of tying his enemy to a tree and slowly burning him to death with firebrands. To the Indians described by Mr. Parkman, such villany formed the most delightful of recreations.

Thus, though the savage has the germ of a moral sense, which prompts him, irrespective of utilitarian considerations, to postpone his personal welfare to that of his clan, he can by no means be accredited with a fully developed moral sense. And the incentives which influence him are not what we call moral sentiments, in the strict sense of the phrase. "They are simply sentiments that precede and make possible those highest sentiments which do not refer either to personal benefits or evils to be expected from men, or to more remote rewards and punishments." The lower incentives have indeed continued to exert a powerful, perhaps a predominating, influence down to the present time. So long as readers are found for ethical treatises, like that of Jonathan Dymond, in which the sole ground of moral obligation is held to be the supernaturally revealed fiat of an anthropomorphic Deity; "while sermons set forth the torments of the damned and the joys of the blessed as the chief deterrents and incentives, and while we have prepared for us printed instructions 'how to make the best of both worlds'; it cannot be denied that the feelings which impel and restrain men are still largely composed of elements like those operative on the savage,—the dread, partly vague, partly specific, associated with the idea of reprobation, human and divine, and the sense of satisfaction, partly vague, partly specific, associated with the idea of approbation, human and divine."[1] But a sound ethical philosophy regards it as degrading to perform good actions or to refrain from performing bad actions merely in order to win applause or to secure a place in heaven. Something more is needed to complete our account of the moral sense.

[1] Spencer, *Principles of Psychology*, vol. ii. p. 602.

Nevertheless, the more perilous portions of the labyrinth have been traversed, I hope with safety, and we now need only one more clew to bring us to the light. We shall best realize the character of this additional element needed, if we consider for a moment the most general aspects of the two groups of feelings already described. While the feelings of which we first treated under the head of pleasures and pains are purely egoistic or self-regarding feelings, on the other hand the feelings which we have lately described as underlying and forming the groundwork of the moral sense in a state of sociality have been happily characterized by Mr. Spencer as "ego-altruistic" feelings. That is, they concern the happiness of the individual in so far as it depends upon the feelings with which his fellow-creatures regard him. The mixed feeling ordinarily known as generosity, for example, is often to a very large extent ego-altruistic. "The state of consciousness which accompanies performance of an act beneficial to another is usually mixed; and often the pleasure given is represented less vividly than are the recipient's feeling toward the giver and the approval of spectators. The sentiment of generosity proper is, however, unmixed in those cases where the benefaction is anonymous: provided, also, that there is no contemplation of a reward to be reaped hereafter. These conditions being fulfilled, the benefaction clearly implies a vivid representation of the pleasurable feelings (usually themselves representative) which the recipient will have." [1]

This vivid representation of the pleasurable or painful feelings experienced by others is sympathy; and the additional factor to be taken into the account, in order to complete the explanation of the moral sense, is the enormous expansion of sympathy which has been due to the continued integration of communities, and to the accompanying decrease of warlike or predatory activity. A word of passing comment only is

[1] Spencer, *Principles of Psychology*, vol. ii. p. 613.

needed for the cynical theory that sympathy is but an ethereally refined selfishness, and that when we relieve a fellow-creature in distress we do it only because it pains us to see him suffer. This is true; but when the pain occasioned by the sight of another's suffering, or by the idea of suffering and wrong when generalized and detached from the incidents of particular cases, becomes so strong as to determine our actions, then the chasm is entirely crossed which divides us psychically from the brutes. Between the Fiji, who keenly relishes the shrieks of his human victim, and Uncle Toby, who could not kill a fly and pitied even the Devil, the difference has come to be generic. And when this kind of self-pleasing is carried so far as to lead a man to risk his life in the effort to rescue a stranger, or perhaps even an enemy, from fire, or drowning, it is so widely removed from what we mean when we speak of selfishness as to be antithetical to it. We do not describe the workings of Shakespeare's genius as reflex actions, though all intelligence was originally reflex action. Neither are we justified in describing as selfish the actions which are dictated by sympathy, though all sympathy is in its origin a kind of self-pleasing.

As already shown in describing the chief characteristics of the evolution of society, the primary cause which has developed sympathy at the expense of the egoistic instincts has been the continued integration of communities, originally mere tribes or clans, into social aggregates of higher and higher orders of complexity. For by this long-continued process the opportunities for the exercise of the altruistic feelings have been necessarily increased in number and frequency of occurrence, while the occasions requiring the exercise of the anti-social feelings have become less frequent, so that the former set of feelings have become strengthened by use, while the latter have become relatively weakened by disuse. Along with this direct and obvious effect of social integration, another effect has been wrought, indirect and

less obvious. A high development of sympathy cannot be secured without a high development of representativeness, so closely inter-related are our intellectual and moral natures. A very feeble faculty of imagining objects and relations not present to sense must necessitate an absence of active sympathetic emotion, save in its crudest form. It is a familiar fact that many men are cruel, in word or deed, because they are incapable of adequately representing to themselves the pain, physical or mental, of which they are the cause. The validity of such an interpretation is confirmed by the fact that even where there is very high representative capacity, the lack of the requisite elements of personal experience will prevent the rise of sympathetic feeling. Thus it is notoriously difficult for strong and healthy people to enter into the feelings of those who are weak and nervous. These facts show that the development of sympathy is largely determined by the development of the representative faculty and by increasing width and variety of experience. With the simplest form of sympathy, such as the painful thrill felt on seeing some one in a dangerous position, contrast such a complex sentiment as the sense of injustice, and it becomes evident that the latter feeling differs from the former mainly in degree and quantity of representativeness. In the former case there is a representation of the injury or death impending over some person immediately in sight; and it is the shrinking from this detriment to the fulness of life of another person which constitutes the sympathetic feeling. In the latter case—supposing, for example, the kind of injustice in question to be that against which English-speaking people have made provision in *habeas corpus* acts—there is the sympathetic excitement of that highly representative egoistic sentiment known as the love of personal freedom. At first a mere recalcitration against whatever impedes the free action of the limbs, this egoistic feeling has, through increased power of representation, developed into a dislike and dread

of whatever possible combination of circumstances may in any way, however remotely, interfere with the fullest legitimate exercise of all the functions of physical and psychical life. To have this complex feeling sympathetically excited for persons whom one has never seen, and who are perhaps yet unborn,—and still more, to be so far possessed by this highly generalized and impersonal sympathy as to risk one's own liberty and life in efforts to avert the possible evils which are the objects of its dread,—implies a power of representing absent relations such as has yet been acquired by only two or three of the most highly gifted families of mankind. And manifestly the sentiments which respond to the notions of justice and injustice in the abstract, are still more remotely representative, still more highly generalized, and still more thoroughly disengaged from the consideration of concrete instances of pleasure and pain.

To this expansion of the power of sympathetically representing feelings detached from the incidents of particular cases, until the sphere of its exercise has become even wider than the human race, and includes all sentient existence, is due our instinctive abhorrence of actions which the organically registered experience of mankind has associated with pain and evil, and our instinctive approval of actions similarly associated with pleasure and increased fulness of life. It is not that, as in intellectual progress, there has been a registration of inferences, at first conscious, but finally automatic; but it is that there has been a registration of feelings respectively awakened by pleasure-giving and pain-giving actions. And just as men's intellectual conceptions of the causes of phenomena become more and more impersonal as they are extended over wider and wider groups of phenomena, generating at last an abstract conception of Universal Cause, so free from the element of personality that to less cultivated minds it seems atheistic; so in like manner, as the sympathetic feelings are extended over wider and wider

areas, no longer needing the stimulus of present pains and pleasures to call them forth, they generate at last an abstract moral sense, so free from the element of personality that to grosser minds it is unintelligible. The savage cannot understand the justice which he sees among Europeans, and the mercy of the white man is ascribed by him to imbecility or fear. To him some personal end seems necessary as an incentive to action. But the philanthropist finds an adequate incentive in the contemplation of injustice in the abstract.

Thus the ethical theories, as well as the psychology, of the schools of Hume and Kant, appear to be reconciled in the deeper synthesis rendered possible by the theory of evolution. On the one hand, it is a corollary from the laws of life that actions desired by the individual and approved by the community must in the long run be those which tend to heighten the life respectively of the individual and of the community. And on the other hand, it is equally true that there is a highly complex feeling, the product of a slow emotional evolution, which prompts us to certain lines of conduct irrespective of any conscious estimate of pleasures or utilities. In no department of inquiry is the truth and grandeur of the Doctrine of Evolution more magnificently illustrated than in the province of ethics.

Before we conclude, there are one or two further points to which it seems necessary to allude. In asserting that we possess an instinctive and inherited moral sense, it is not meant that we possess, anterior to education and experience, an organic preference for certain particular good actions, and an organic repugnance to certain particular bad actions. We do not inherit a horror of stealing, any more than the Hindu inherits the horror of killing cattle. We simply inherit a feeling which leads us, when we are told that stealing is wrong, to shun it, without needing to be taught that it is detrimental to society. Hence there is a chance for pathological disturbances in the relations between the

moral sense and the actions with which it is concerned. Imperfectly adjusted moral codes arise, and false principles of action gain temporary currency. These, nevertheless, come ultimately to outrage our sympathies, and are consequently overthrown; while the principles of action which really tend to heighten the life of society are sustained by our sympathies ever more and more forcibly, and at last become invested with a sacredness which is denied to the others. Hence arises the ethical distinction between *mala prohibita* and *mala in se*.

Finally, it is not to be denied that, when the intelligence is very high, there is likely to arise a deliberate pursuit of moral excellence, attended by a distinct knowledge of the elements in which such excellence consists. Instead of being primeval, as the cruder utilitarianism seems to have imagined, such conscious devotion to ends conducive to the happiness of society is the latest and highest product of social evolution, and becomes possible only when the moral sense is extremely developed. At this stage, ethical conceptions begin to be reflected back upon the conduct of the individual where it concerns solely or chiefly himself; and the self-regarding virtues, as Mr. Darwin calls them, which are quite unknown save in a high state of civilization, come into existence. The injury of one's self, by evil thoughts, intemperate behaviour, or indulgence of appetite, comes to be regarded as not only physically injurious, but morally wrong; and there arises the opinion that it is selfish and wicked for one to neglect one's own health or culture. Here we approach the limits at which morality shades off into religion. For, as I shall hereafter show,[1] Religion views the individual in his relations to the Infinite Power manifested in a universe of causally connected phenomena, as Morality views him in relation to his fellow-creatures. To violate the decrees of Nature comes to be considered a sin, capable of

[1] See below, part iii. chap. v.

awakening keen remorse; for to him whose mental habits have been nurtured by scientific studies, the principles of action prescribed by the need for harmonizing inner with outer relations are, in the truest sense, the decrees of God.

And now, having reached the terminus of our inquiry, let us look back over the course for a moment, that we may see the character of the progress we have achieved. Such a retrospect is here especially needed, because the complexity of our subject has been so great, and the range of our illustrations so wide, that the cardinal points in our argument have perhaps run some risk of getting overlaid and concealed from view, and in particular it may not be sufficiently obvious how completely we have attained the object set before us as the goal of the present chapter and its predecessor, namely, to explain the genesis of the psychical forces which wrought the decisive change from animality to humanity. That we may well appreciate the solid consistency of the entire argument concerning the Genesis of Man, let us therefore contemplate in a single view its various factors.

We have seen that the progress from brute to man has been but slightly characterized by change in general bodily structure in comparison with the enormous change which has been wrought in the cerebrum, and in those highest psychical functions which stand in correlation with the condition of the cerebrum. We have seen that the development of these highest psychical functions, in all their wondrous variety and complexity, has consisted at bottom in the increase of the power of mentally representing objects and relations remote from sense. By the reiterated testimony of many diverse kinds of illustrative facts, we have been convinced that in mere quantity of representative capacity, with its infinitely various consequences, the civilized man surpasses the lowest savage by a far greater interval than

that by which the lowest savage surpasses the highest ape; just as the gulf between the cerebral capacity of the Englishman and that of the non-Aryan dweller in Hindustan is six times greater than the gulf which similarly divides the non-Aryan Hindu from the gorilla. And we have indicated in sundry ways how this increase in representative capacity, itself a pre-requisite to any high degree of social combination, has been furthered by each advance in social combination, so that the enormous psychical progress achieved since mankind became distinctly human has been mainly dependent upon that increasing heterogeneity of experience which increasing social integration has supplied.

But in spite of the fact that the psychical progress achieved since mankind became distinctly human is so much greater in quantity than that which was required to carry it from apehood to manhood, we were led to adopt the Duke of Argyll's suggestion, that the boundary was really crossed when this preliminary and less conspicuous psychical progress had been achieved. And working out the happy thought which science owes to Mr. Wallace, we concluded that this comparatively inconspicuous but all-essential step in psychical progress was taken when the intelligence of the progenitors of mankind had reached the point where a slight increase in representative capacity came to be of greater utility to the species than any practicable variation in bodily structure. Here our first line of inquiry ended. So far as the mere subordination of physical to psychical modification is concerned, the character of the progress from apehood to manhood now became intelligible.

But at this point we were confronted with a new question, suggested by some of the conclusions obtained on our first line of inquiry. Having perceived that the intellectual progress, or increase in representative capacity, which distinguishes man from brutè, is so intimately connected with man's capacity for social combination, it became needful

to search for the circumstances which begot in the progenitors of mankind the capacity for a kind of social combination more definite in the character of its relationships than that quasi-social combination, not uncommon among mammals, which is known as gregariousness. In other words, seeing that such thinkers as Sir Henry Maine have shown that the primordial unit of society, by the manifold compounding of which great tribes and nations have come into existence, was the aboriginal family group, with its nascently ethical relationships between the members, how shall we explain the genesis of these family groups, which have nothing strictly answering to them, either among non-human primates or among other gregarious animals?

The feature by which the most rudimentary human family group is distinguished from any collocation of kindred individuals among gregarious mammals is the permanent character of the relationships between its constituent members. Enduring from birth until death, these relationships acquire a traditionary value which passes on from generation to generation, and thus there arise reciprocal necessities of behaviour between parents and children, husbands and wives, brethren and sisters, in which reciprocal necessities of behaviour we have discerned the requisite conditions for the genesis of those ego-altruistic impulses which, when further modified by the expansion of the sympathetic feelings, give birth to moral sentiments. Accordingly the phenomenon which demands explanation is the existence of permanent relationships, giving rise to reciprocal necessities of behaviour, among a group of individuals associated for the performance of sexual and parental functions.

The explanation, as I have shown, is to be found in that gradual prolongation of the period of infancy, which is one of the consequences, as yet but partially understood, of increasing intelligence. Let us observe the causal connections,

so far as we can trace them out, recalling some of the conclusions reached in the chapter on the Evolution of Mind.

In an animal whose relations with its environment are very simple, resulting in an experience which is but slightly varied, the combinations of acts requisite for supporting life take place with a regularity and monotony approaching the monotonous regularity with which the functions of the viscera are performed. Hence the tendency to perform these actions is completely established at birth in each individual, just as the tendency of the viscera to perform their several functions is pre-established, all that is required in addition being simply the direct stimulus of outward physical opportunity. And the psychical life of such an animal we call purely instinctive or automatic. In such an animal the organized experience of the race counts for everything, the experience of the individual for nothing, save as contributing its mite towards the cumulated experience of the race. But in an animal whose relations with its environment are very complex, resulting in an experience which is necessarily varied to a considerable extent from generation to generation, the combinations of acts requisite for supporting life must occur severally with far less frequency than in the case of the lower animal just considered. Hence the tendency to perform any particular group of these actions will *not* be completely established at birth in each individual, like the tendency of the viscera to perform their several functions. On the other hand, there will be a multitude of conflicting tendencies, and it will be left for the circumstances subsequent to birth to determine which groups of tendencies shall be carried out into action. The psychical life of such an animal is no longer purely automatic or instinctive. A portion of its life is spent in giving direction to its future career, and in thus further modifying the inherited tendencies with which its offspring start in life. In such an animal the organized experience of the race counts for much, but the

special experience of the individual counts for something in altering the future career of the race. Such an animal is capable of psychical progress, and such an animal must begin life, not with matured faculties, but as an infant. Instead of a few actually realized capacities, it starts with a host of potential capacities, of which the play of circumstance must determine what ones shall be realizable.

Manifestly, therefore, the very state of things which made psychical variation more advantageous to the progenitors of mankind than physical variation, this very state of things simultaneously conspired to enhance the progressiveness of primeval man and to prolong the period of his infancy, until the plastic or malleable part of his life came to extend over several years, instead of terminating in rigidity in the course of four or five months, as with the orang-outang. Upon the consequences of this state of things, in gradually bringing about that capacity for progress which distinguishes man from all lower animals, I need not further enlarge. What we have here especially to note, amid the entanglement of all these causes conspiring to educe humanity from animality, is the fact, illustrated above, that this prolongation of infancy was manifestly the circumstance which knit those permanent relationships, giving rise to reciprocal necessities of behaviour, which distinguish the rudest imaginable family group of men from the highest imaginable association of gregarious non-human primates.

In this line of inquiry, which, so far as I know, has never yet been noticed by any of the able writers who have dealt with the origin of the human race, it seems to me that we have the clew to the solution of the entire problem. In this new suggestion as to the causes and the effects of the prolonged infancy of man, I believe we have a suggestion as fruitful as the one which we owe to Mr. Wallace. And the most beautiful and striking feature in this treatment of the problem is the way in which all the suggestions hitherto

made agree in helping us to the solution. That same increase in representativeness, which is at the bottom of intellectual progressiveness, is also at the bottom of sociality, since it necessitates that prolongation of infancy to which the genesis of sociality, as distinguished from mere gregariousness, must look for its explanation. In this phenomenon of the prolonging of the period of infancy we find the bond of connection between the problems which occupy such thinkers as Mr. Wallace and those which occupy such thinkers as Sir Henry Maine. We bridge the gulf which seems, on a superficial view, for ever to divide the human from the brute world. And not least, in the grand result, is the profound meaning which is given to the phenomena of helpless babyhood. From of old we have heard the monition, "Except ye be as babes, ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." The latest science now shows us—though in a very different sense of the words—that, unless we had been as babes, the ethical phenomena which give all its significance to the phrase "kingdom of heaven" would have been non-existent for us. Without the circumstances of infancy we might have become formidable among animals through sheer force of sharp-wittedness. But, except for these circumstances, we should never have comprehended the meaning of such phrases as "self-sacrifice" or "devotion." The phenomena of social life would have been omitted from the history of the world, and with them the phenomena of ethics and of religion.

PART III.

COROLLARIES.

" Was wär' ein Gott der nur von aussen stiesse,
Im Kreis das All am Finger laufen liesse!
Ihm ziemt's die Welt im Innern zu bewegen,
Natur in Sich, Sich in Natur zu hegen;
So dass was in Ihm lebt und webt und ist
Nie seine Kraft, nie seinen Geist vermisst."

GOETHE.

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."—ISAIAH.

CHAPTER I.

THE QUESTION RESTATED.

A SYNTHESIS of scientific doctrines has now been fairly constructed, in accordance with the plan laid out in the eleventh chapter of our Prolegomena. We have passed in review the sciences which deal with the various orders of phenomena that make up the knowable universe, and we have contemplated the widest truths which these sciences severally reveal, as corollaries of an ultimate truth. Before proceeding to expound our Cosmic Philosophy in its final results, let us briefly sum up the leading conclusions at which we have arrived.

It has been proved to follow from that axiom of the Persistence of Force upon which all physical science is based, that the mere coexistence of innumerable discrete bodies in the universe, exerting attractive and repulsive forces upon each other, necessitates a perpetual rhythmical redistribution of the Matter and Motion of which the phenomenal universe is composed. It has been proved that this eternal rhythm must of necessity be manifested in alternating eras both general and local, of Evolution and Dissolution,— eras in which now the concentration of Matter and dissipation of Motion, and now the diffusion of Matter and absorption of Motion, predominate,—eras which may be short, as in the duration of

a snow-crystal or of a butterfly's life, or long, as in the duration of our planetary system. It has been proved that the process of Evolution, during which Matter is chiefly being concentrated while Motion is chiefly being lost, must, under certain assigned conditions, result in a continuous change from a state of homogeneity, indefiniteness, and incoherence to a state of heterogeneity, definiteness, and coherence.

With the aid of these demonstrated truths of Physics, we have surveyed the history of the knowable universe, intent upon finding some provisional answer to the time-honoured question of Philosophy—whence came we, what are we, and whither do we tend? Throughout all the provinces of nature we have traced that aspect of the stupendous process of Evolution, which consists in the transition from indefinite incoherent homogeneity to definite coherent heterogeneity. We have seen it exemplified in the development of our planetary system from a relatively homogeneous ball of vapour. We have witnessed it as shown in the increasing physical and chemical diversity and interdependence of the various portions of the surface of our cooling earth, and in those wonderful differentiations by which solar radiance is metamorphosed into the innumerable forms of energy manifested alike by winds and waves, by growing plants and animals, and by reasoning men. We have described it in some detail as revealed in the gradual change of a seed into a tree and of an ovum into an adult mammal. We have observed it also in the increasing chemical complexity which at a remote epoch resulted in the formation of living protoplasm; and we have seen how from this earliest protoplasm there have arisen, in the course of ages well-nigh infinite in duration, the myriad forms of animal and vegetable life. The progress toward higher complexity and higher organization has likewise been discovered to be taking place in *processes* as well as in *things*. It has been shown that Life is

a process, consisting in a series of adjustments between the organism and its environment; and that Mind, objectively considered, is a special form of Life, consisting in a specialized portion of the series of adjustments. In these wondrous processes we have found the Law of Evolution most beautifully exemplified; the degree of Life, or of Mind, being high in proportion not only to the extent which the adjustments cover, but also to their complexity, definiteness, and coherence. That superadded process known as Civilization or social progress, has also been shown to consist in a series of adjustments between the community and its environment, in the course of which society becomes ever more and more complex and more interdependent in its various elements. That moral sense which underlies social progress and renders it possible, has been exhibited as the noble product of the slow organization of those feelings of pleasure and pain which, in highly-developed organisms, are mainly concerned in enhancing the perfectness of the adjustments in which Life consists. And finally we have witnessed the wonderful complication of cooperating processes by which Humanity—the crown and glory of the universe as we know it—has been evolved from a lower type of animal life, in entire conformity to the general law. The direct and relatively-simple processes of physical adjustment became at length almost wholly subordinated to the indirect and relatively-complex processes of psychical adjustment, so that variations in intelligence came to be selected in preference to variations in physique; the increased complexity of psychical adjustments entailed the lengthening of the period required for organizing them; the lengthening of infancy, thus entailed, brought about the segregation, into permanent family-groups, of individuals associated for the performance of sexual and parental functions; the maintenance of such family-groups involved the setting up of permanent reciprocal necessities of behaviour among the members of the group;

in this way the ultimate test of right and wrong action came to be the welfare of the community, instead of the welfare of the individual; the long process of social evolution, thus inaugurated, has all along reacted upon individual evolution, by increasing the power of mental representation, and nourishing sympathy at the expense of egoism; and thus, through one and the same endlessly complicated plexus of causes, has arisen the historic Man, with his Intellect and his Moral Sense. Yet endlessly complicated as the process has been, we see that it is throughout definable as the gradual substitution of adjustments that are relatively-indirect, heterogeneous, and highly organized, for adjustments that are relatively-direct, homogeneous, and slightly organized.

Thus we have fulfilled all the requirements laid down in the concluding chapter of our Prolegomena. We have found a hypothesis which is based upon properties of matter and principles of dynamics that have previously been established; which appeals to no unknown agency and invokes no unknown attribute of matter or motion; and which, accordingly, contains no unverifiable element. This hypothesis has been successfully subjected to both deductive and inductive verification. In every department of nature it has triumphantly borne the supreme test of reconciling the order of conceptions with the order of phenomena. And in our sociological chapters, as well as in the chapters on the Genesis of Man, it has enabled us to detect relations among phenomena which had hitherto remained in obscurity.

It remains to add that this grand hypothesis, for the conception and elaboration of which I have ventured to liken Mr. Spencer to the thinker who conceived and elaborated the hypothesis of gravitation, affords in itself a striking illustration of that process of Evolution which it formulates. Considered as an event in intellectual development, this discovery is an immense *extension in time* of the correspondence between the order of human conceptions and the order of

phenomena, as Newton's discovery was an immense extension of the correspondence in space. The one has enabled us to adjust our mental sequences to phenomena as distant as the Milky Way; the other carries back the adjustments till they comprehend the birth of the Solar System. The announcement of a verifiable Law of Evolution is but the most recent phase of a process which has been going on from the time when men first began to speculate about the world of phenomena,—the process of substituting what may be called dynamical habits of thought for statical habits. Clearly the formation of a theory of the universe, whether as expressed in the crude mythologies of barbarians or in the elaborate systems of modern philosophers, is the establishment of a complex group of subjective relations that are either very imperfectly or much more completely adjusted to objective relations. All men now existing, whether civilized or savage, with the exception of idiots and very young children, possess some such theory, however vague and shadowy it may be. Such general statements as may be made by the most ignorant boor obviously imply some dim conception of the world and of his relations to it. Even the beliefs that the moon is about the size of a cheese, or that the devil has bewitched his cattle, are parts of a rudimentary kind of cosmic philosophy. Now among uneducated persons, alike in barbarous and in civilized countries, the crude philosophies current universally imply that the general arrangement of things is everywhere and in all ages substantially the same as it is witnessed by them in their immediate environment. Their theories are not adjusted to remote facts in time and space which only a thorough education could have added to their experience. They take what we may call a statical view of things. Hence they suppose that God created the world a few thousand years ago in nearly the same condition in which we now behold it; traditional observances, such as the keeping of a Sabbath,

advanced social institutions, like monogamy, and highly elaborated philosophical doctrines, such as monotheism, are unhesitatingly referred back to the beginning of the world; and it is in general taken for granted that the thoughts and feelings current in past ages were like the thoughts and feelings current in our own. Until within the last three or four generations this statical view of things was shared by cultivated with uncultivated people, though with somewhat different degrees of narrowness. On the other hand the dynamic view of things, represented by the Doctrine of Evolution, which regards the universe and all that is in it as presenting a different aspect from epoch to epoch, obviously results from the adjustment of our theories to longer and longer sequences in the past. The progress of geologic discovery, revealing the immense antiquity of the earth, was one of the circumstances which began to arouse in educated people a tendency to regard things as continually though slowly changing; and the theories of Goethe and Lyell, the revolution in biology wrought by Lamarck and Cuvier, and the application of the comparative method to the historic and philologic interpretation of past states of society, deepened and strengthened this tendency. In no other respect is the present age so widely distinguished from past ages as in this habit of looking at all things dynamically. It is shown in the literary criticism of Sainte-Beuve, and the art-criticism of Taine, and in the historical criticism of Mommsen or Baur, no less than in Mr. Darwin's science, or Mr. Spencer's philosophy. In our concluding chapter we shall observe some of the practical bearings of this great difference in mental habit between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with especial reference to the political utopias of Rousseau, and to the attempts of the *Encyclopédistes* to overthrow Christianity. It is enough for us now to bear in mind that this immense widening of the mental horizon which modern times have witnessed; this power of criti-

cizing sympathetically the relatively rude theories, customs, and prejudices of bygone generations; this ability to realize in imagination a time when forms of life now wholly distinct were represented by a common ancestral type, or a time when the material universe existed in a shape very different from that in which it is presented to our senses; this growing tendency to interpret groups of phenomena by reference to other groups of phenomena long preceding; are all alike explicable, in an ultimate analysis, as a prodigious extension in time of the correspondence between the human mind and its environment.

The Doctrine of Evolution, in which this dynamical habit of viewing things is reduced to a system, represents also the most extensive integration of correspondences that has yet been achieved. The continuous organization of scientific truths by philosophy has all along been a progress in this kind of integration. From the very first crude observations and the earliest cosmical theories, it is true that succeeding observations have all along had their results incorporated with the cosmical theories, or else new cosmical theories have been framed, which, by including the results of more mature observation, have superseded the old ones. In this way the progress of philosophy has on the whole kept pace with that of science. But between the earlier systems and the more modern ones there is a marked difference in the extent to which special truths in different departments of science are made to support and illustrate each other. For the gaps in the scientific knowledge synthesized in older systems were so considerable that, in order to make a synthesis at all, it was necessary to incorporate a large amount of hypothetical speculation which was not only unverified but unverifiable; so that the relations between science and philosophy were much less coherent than at present. To-day the interdependence is more complete than ever before. Our cosmic theories are rapidly modified by the incorpora-

tion of the results of countless new observations in all departments of science; and philosophy, refraining more and more from ontological speculations, is becoming more and more thoroughly identified with cosmology. It is recognizing more and more fully that its proper business is to oversee and coordinate those seemingly separate groups of scientific truths which scientific specialists have not the leisure, and often neither the desire nor the ability, to coordinate. And obviously the philosophy most completely organized after this manner, constitutes the most complete integration of correspondences between the order of conceptions and the order of phenomena. It constitutes an integral body of knowledge, the various members of which are at once more distinctly demarcated from each other and more intimately dependent upon each other than in any previous system.

Thus, in accordance with the expectation held out in an earlier chapter,[1] we find that "from the earliest traceable cosmical changes down to the latest products of civilization," there has been going on, and is going on, a ceaseless process of change, of which the main features are simple enough to be clearly deducible from the known physical properties of the universe, but of which the stupendous grandeur is such as to baffle the most strenuous efforts alike of reason and of imagination to follow it out in all its concrete details. Thus, too, we find ourselves amply rewarded for the hope with which we set out upon our inquiry,—namely, that in henceforth abandoning vain ontological speculation we were by no means about to dethrone Philosophy, but were on the point of winning for it even a goodlier realm than that which metaphysics had assigned to it. For in comparison with the sublime synthesis of truths which the foregoing chapters have but unworthily interpreted, all previous philosophic speculation seems fragmentary, crude,

[1] See above, vol. i. p. 352.

and unsatisfying. To no other theory of things yet devised by the wit of man can we so well apply the enthusiastic exclamation of Giordano Bruno:—"Con questa filosofia l'anima mi s' aggrandisce, e mi si magnifica l'intelletto."

But while one part of our task has thus been fairly accomplished, another and equally important part still remains to be disposed of. Questions have from time to time been implicitly suggested, to which provisional answers must be given before our Cosmic Philosophy can be regarded as satisfactorily expounded, even in outline. That great Doctrine, for the establishing of which all departments of human knowledge have been laid under contribution, and which in turn is fast remodelling human thinking on all subjects whatever, has relations of the closest sort with religious philosophy. Sundry theological questions raised in the course of our Prolegomena must now be considered in the light of the general principles with which our survey of universal evolution has furnished us. Questions concerning God and the Soul, which the Positive Philosophy simply set aside as unworthy the attention of scientific thinkers, nevertheless cannot be ignored by any philosophy which seeks to bring about a harmony between human knowledge and human aspirations; and though we may confess ourselves unable to settle such questions, as scientific questions are settled, we may yet go as far as is possible without deserting the objective method, and indicate the position which we occupy with reference to them. We have already, in the earlier part of this work, been brought to the conclusion that the phenomenal universe is the manifestation of a Divine Power that cannot be identified with the totality of phenomena:[1] we have now to unfold, somewhat more fully, what is meant by this theistic conclusion. We have,

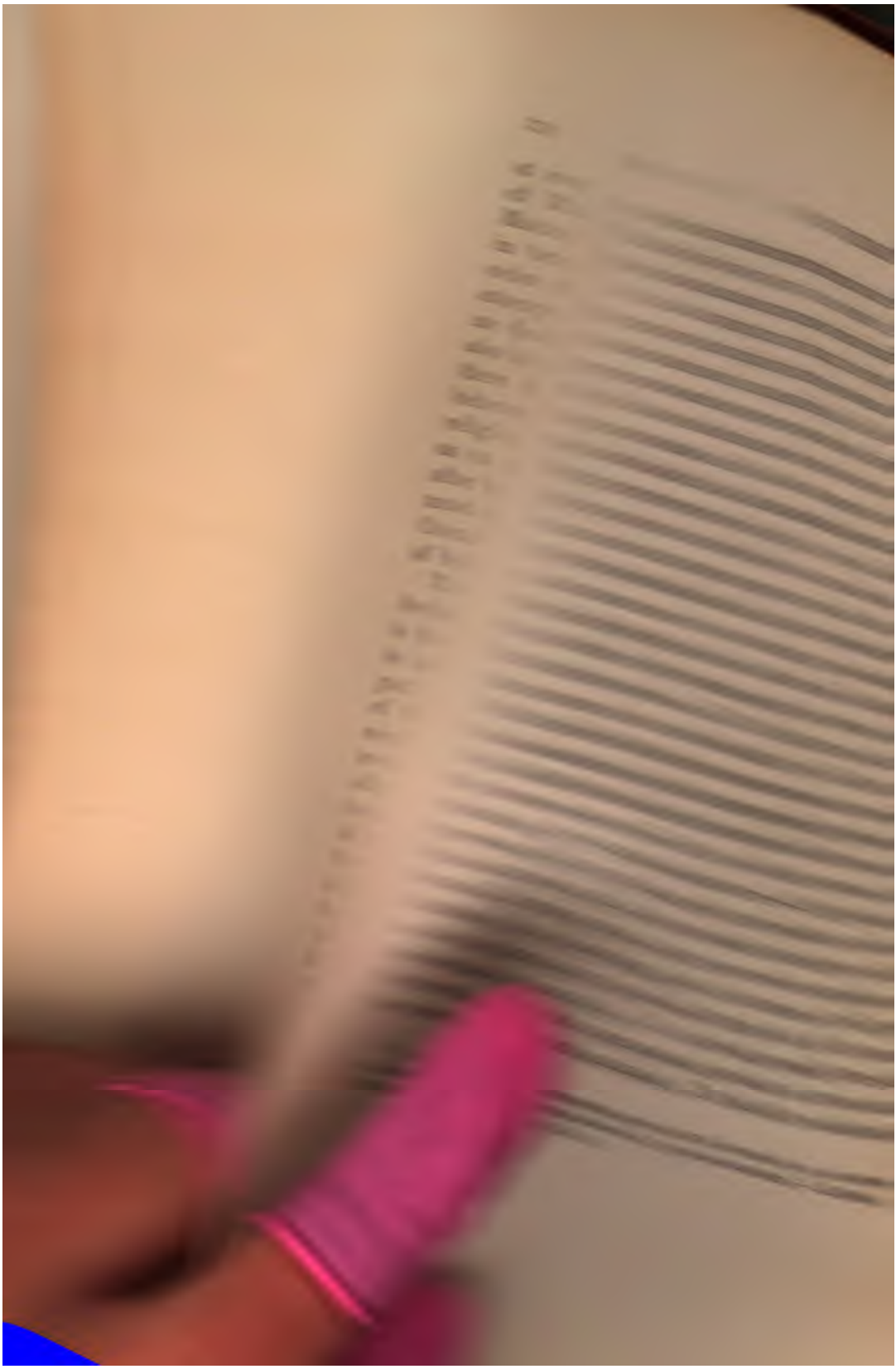
[1] This is implied in the statements in vol. i. p. 88, and also in the chapter on "Anthropomorphism and Cosmism." See also vol. i. p. 188.

at every fitting opportunity, declared that the phenomena of Mind can in nowise be explained as movements of Matter,[1] while at the same time a law of evolution, expressed in terms of matter and motion, is found to include the order of sequence of psychical phenomena: we must now attempt to clear away the difficulties which, to many minds, no doubt cluster around the seeming paradox. We have also hinted that beside the sphere to be assigned to Morality, there is a wider sphere to be assigned to Religion:[2] it behoves us now to show what are the general functions of religion, in accordance with our fundamental view of Life as an adjustment between inner and outer relations. And after having done what we can to elucidate these points, we must conclude by describing the critical attitude which our Cosmic Philosophy occupies with reference to other systems of belief and other principles of action.

The central problem, which must first occupy us, and the decision of which will affect the treatment of all the others, is the problem of Theism. What kind of theism is it which is compatible with the conclusions reached in the second part of this work concerning the past and present states of the universe? In discussing this question we shall presently find that the phase of theism which has until quite recently been the current phase, and which is still the phase officially defended by theologians, does not appear to be compatible with the conclusions referred to. As in treating of the preliminary evidence for the evolution of the higher forms of life from lower forms, we found ourselves at every step arrayed in opposition to the doctrine of special creations bequeathed to us by ancient mythology, so now upon this wider ground we shall have to note that the Doctrine of Evolution is throughout irreconcilably opposed to the Doctrine of Creation, so that the establishment of the former

[1] See vol. i. pp. 270, 412; vol. ii. pp. 80, 162.
[2] See above, p. 357.

is in fact synonymous with the overthrow and destruction of the latter. In coming to regard the universe as evolved in accordance with discernible physical laws, working throughout a lapse of time to which human thinking can assign neither a beginning nor an end, we cease to regard it as created at any given point of time in accordance with a preconceived plan remotely analogous to the plans by which finite intelligence adapts means to ends. It is not, as we shall see in a moment, that the one conception metaphysically refutes the other, but that it practically supersedes it, and enables philosophy to dispense with it. While upon the time-honoured statical view of things, any given group of phenomena was explained by a reference to the direct creative action of a divine Power extraneous to the Cosmos; on the other hand, upon the modern dynamical view of things, any given group of phenomena is explained by a reference to some antecedent group of phenomena, while all phenomena alike are regarded as the sensible manifestations of a divine Power immanent in the Cosmos. It becomes desirable, therefore, to inquire whether on the new view there is any ground for assuming, as was necessarily assumed on the old view, that the divine Power works by methods analogous to human methods. The question which we have to answer is not whether there exists a God. As was clearly shown in the first part of this work, and as will presently be still more emphatically reiterated, our Cosmic Philosophy is based upon the affirmation of God's existence, and not upon the denial of it, like irreligious Atheism, or upon the ignoring of it, like non-religious Positivism. The question which we have now to answer concerns the existence of a limited personal God, who is possessed of a quasi-human consciousness, from whose quasi-human volitions have originated the laws of nature, and to whose quasi-human contrivance are due the manifold harmonies observed in the universe. Is this most refined and subtilized remnant



or the physical intervention of the Devil in human affairs, is now laughed at; yet two centuries have hardly elapsed since it was held by learned and sensible men, as an essential part of Christianity. It was supported by an immense amount of testimony, which no one has ever refuted in detail. No one, for example, has ever disproved witchcraft, as Young disproved the corpuscular theory of light. But the belief has died out because scientific cultivation has rendered the mental soil unfit for it. The contemporaries of Bodin were so thoroughly predisposed by their general theory of things to believe in the continual intervention of the Devil, that it needed but the slightest evidence to make them credit any particular act of intervention. But to the educated man of to-day such intervention seems too improbable to be admitted on any amount of testimony. The hypothesis of diabolic interference is simply ruled out; and will remain ruled out. So with what is called "spiritualism," or the belief in the physical intervention of the souls of the dead in human affairs. Men of science decline to waste their time in arguing against it, because they know that the only way in which to destroy it is to educate people in science. "Spiritualism" is simply one of the weeds which spring up in minds uncultivated by science. There is little use in merely pulling up one form of the superstition by the roots, for another form, equally noxious, is sure to take root: the only way of ensuring the destruction of the pests is to sow the seeds of scientific truth. When, therefore, we are gravely told what persons of undoubted veracity have seen, we are affected about as much as if a friend should come in and assure us, upon his honour as a gentleman, that heat is not a mode of motion. The case is the same with the belief in miracles, or the physical intervention of the Deity in human affairs. To the theologian such intervention is *à priori* so probable that he needs but [illegible] historic testimony to make him believe in it. To the [illegible]tific thinker it is *à priori* so improbable that no amount

of historic testimony, such as can be produced, suffices to make him entertain the hypothesis for an instant. Hence it is that such critics as Strauss and Renan, to the great disgust of theologians, always assume, prior to argument, that miraculous narratives are legendary. Hence it is that when the slowly dying belief in miracles finally perishes, it will not be because any one will ever have refuted it by an array of syllogisms: the syllogisms of the theologian and those of the thinker trained in science have no convincing power as against each other, because neither accepts the major premise of the other: but it will be because the belief is discordant with the mental habits induced by the general study of science. Hence it is that the scientific philosopher is averse to proselytism, and has no sympathy with radical infidelity. For he knows that theological habits of thought are relatively useful, while scepticism, if permanent, is intellectually and morally pernicious. Knowing this, he knows that the only way to destroy theological habits of thought without detriment, is to nurture scientific habits,—which stifle the former, as surely as clover stifles weeds.

The belief that God works after quasi-human methods is akin to those just cited, in being incapable of proof or disproof by mere syllogism. Our business is only to determine whether the arguments in favour of it are calculated to convince those who insist upon the relativity of all knowledge, and whether the belief itself can be made to harmonize with the scientific truths upon which our Cosmic Philosophy is based. Let us begin by examining the doctrine of final causes, as defended by metaphysical arguments; and let us afterwards observe how this famous argument from design is affected by the theory of evolution.

CHAPTER II.

ANTHROPOMORPHIC THEISM.

THOUGH the mediæval conception of an arbitrary Providence, overruling natural laws and occasionally setting them aside, influenced by human petitions to bring about special results by extraordinary means, and singling out nations or individuals as the objects of its favour or displeasure, has been partially abandoned for a more refined conception of theism, in which the Deity is represented as working through natural laws; yet the survival of the doctrine of final causes shows that a strong element of anthropomorphism is retained even in the latter conception. The doctrine of final causes ultimately reposes on the assumption that God entertains intentions and purposes closely resembling in kind, though greatly excelling in degree of sagacity, the purposes and intentions of man. In accordance with this view, we are told that it will not do to content ourselves with the discovery of Law, but that we must also look about for indications of Purpose; since Law is not, relatively to our human understanding, an ultimate fact, but may be recognized by us as the expression of the will of a Lawgiver. Everything that exists—it is said—has been created to subserve some design, and as a means to the accomplishment of some end; and the detection of this end, the penetration of this design

must assist us greatly in the scientific study of the universe. Not only must we inquire, with Sokrates, into the divine purposes subserved by the structure of the eyes and the position of the alimentary canal;[1] but we shall also find it desirable to interpret the design exhibited in the inclinations of the planetary axes; and our knowledge of chemistry must be deemed incomplete until we have ascertained the creative plan in the arrangement of combining equivalents.[2] Not only will light thus be thrown upon many facts which would else have remained for ever wrapped in impenetrable darkness; but the mere recognition of an anthropomorphic purpose or providence in the constitution of things is said to afford unfailing consolation amid perplexity and suffering. He who cherishes the belief in the conscious supervision of a personal Deity is held to possess the surest of safeguards against scepticism and despair.

A hypothesis which holds out such brilliant hopes may well be retained in our Cosmic Philosophy, if it can be shown to be in harmony with the demonstrated scientific truths upon which that philosophy rests. But if this cannot be done, then the hypothesis must be discarded, even though it should carry with it all our hopes and wishes in indiscriminate ruin. It has been well said that "we must follow Truth, though she lead us to Hades." The noble quest in which Science engages is the quest, not of faith or of consolation, but of truth; and, with the scientific philosopher, loyalty to truth is the first principle of religion. The disagreeableness of a well-supported conclusion furnishes no sort of justification for not accepting it, save to those minds which are irreligious as well as unscientific. He who is loyal to Truth

[1] Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, i. 4. § 6.

[2] "The inorganic world, considered in the same light, would not fail to exhibit unexpected evidences of thought, in the character of the laws regulating chemical combinations, the action of physical forces, the universal attraction, etc. Even the history of human culture ought to be investigated from this point of view."—Agassiz, *Essay on Classification*, p. 199.

will never harbour the misgiving that her paths may lead to Hades: he will fearlessly follow the guidance of Science, never doubting that consolation must come of knowing the truth. In the present case we shall find reason to conclude that the hypothesis of a quasi-human God is likely to aggravate rather than to relieve the mental distress of scepticism.

The doctrine of final causes we may first contemplate, for a moment, under its logical aspect, and notice that, even if it were true, it could never have the value which is claimed for it as a means of investigation. Even admitting that all things have been created with forethought, and that the harmonious cooperation of phenomena is the fruit of contrivance, it is none the less undeniable that this forethought cannot be perceived, the threads of this contrivance cannot be unravelled by us, until the laws to which phenomena conform have already been discovered. Previous to Newton, for instance, all attempts to detect design in the structure of the solar system must have shared the fate of the quite different guesses of Descartes and others as to its physical conditions. Evidences of design, therefore, in order to be trustworthy, must be deduced from known laws, and cannot safely be employed as stepping-stones to the discovery of new truths. However plausible they may seem as corollaries, they can never be useful as lemmas or postulates. As M. Scherer well observes, God is the cause of all things, but the explanation of nothing.[1] Accordingly unless we are so arrogant as to lay claim to the possession of some direct

[1] "Dieu, comme on l'a très-bien dit, est la cause de tout, mais il n'est explication de rien." Scherer, *Nouvelles Etudes sur la Littérature Contemporaine*, p. 408. See also Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire, *Anomalies de l'Organisation*, tom. iii. p. 608. The only objection which can be made to M. Scherer's statement is its disjunctive form. Obviously that which is the cause of everything *cannot* be the explanation of anything. We cannot explain any particular group of phenomena by a reference to divine action, because such a reference is merely a reference to the source of all phenomena alike, and hence cannot give us specific information concerning any particular group. Laplace was therefore quite justified in saying "Je n'ai pas besoin de cette hypothèse."

means of insight into the Divine purposes,[1] what is left for us but to content ourselves with the humbler means of research lying everywhere at our disposal—with being "servants and interpreters of nature," as the great master of inductive inquiry so wisely and modestly said?

Not only does the teleological theory thus appear to be useless, from a scientific point of view, but its claim to philosophic validity is open to serious doubt. Looking at it historically, we observe that its career has been that of a perishable hypothesis born of primeval habits of thought, rather than that of a permanent doctrine obtained by the employment of scientific methods. From time to time, with the steady advance of knowledge, the search for final causes has been discarded in the simpler sciences, until it is now kept up only in the complex and difficult branches of biology and sociology. As Laplace observes, final causes disappear as soon as we obtain the data requisite for resolving problems scientifically. Even Dr. Whewell, the great champion of the teleological method in our day, admits that it must not be applied to the inorganic sciences; which amounts to the confession that, wherever we know enough, we can very well do without it.[2] Creative design, however, if manifested at all, is probably not confined to a limited department of nature; and therefore the rejection of teleology

[1] As Descartes somewhere says, "Nous rejetterons entièrement de notre philosophie la recherche des causes finales; car nous ne devons pas tant présumer de nous-mêmes que de croire que Dieu nous ait voulu faire part de ses conseils."

[2] Laplace, *Essai sur les Probabilités*, p. 87; Whewell, *History of the Inductive Sciences*, vol. iii. p. 430. Even in biology the principle does not always work well:—"A final purpose is indeed readily perceived and admitted in regard to the multiplied points of ossification in the skull of the human fœtus and their relation to safe parturition. But when we find that the same ossific centres are established, and in similar order, in the skull of the embryo kangaroo, which is born when an inch in length, and in that of the callow bird that breaks the brittle egg, we feel the truth of Bacon's comparison of final causes to the Vestal Virgins." Owen, *The Nature of Limbs*, p. 39. Or, as Prof. Huxley very happily observes, they "might be more fitly termed the *hetairæ* of philosophy, so constantly have they led men astray." *Lay Sermons*, p. 255.

by the most advanced sciences augurs ill for its ultimate chances of survival in any field of inquiry. Previous to the researches of Kant and Laplace, such phenomena as the distribution of satellites and the inclinations of planetary axes were explained teleologically. These phenomena having been at last interpreted by a reference to universal laws of matter and motion, the teleological hypothesis took refuge in biology, where it held for a while a doubtful tenure, as a means of explaining the origination of specific forms of life. The discoveries of Mr. Darwin having gone far toward driving it from this stronghold, replacing the conception of miraculous interposition by the conception of natural selection, it is nevertheless still appealed to by such writers as Mr. Wallace and Mr. Mivart, as furnishing an explanation for sundry phenomena of organic evolution which natural selection, taken alone, seems at present incompetent to account for. In short, the teleological hypothesis derives its apparent confirmation never from the phenomena which were explained yesterday, but always from the phenomena which are awaiting an explanation to-morrow. "I give up phenomenon A," says the theologian, "for that you have explained in terms of matter and motion; but phenomenon B you can never so explain, and upon that I therefore rest my teleological hypothesis." To-morrow phenomenon B is interpreted in terms of matter and motion, and appeal is made to phenomenon C; and so on, to the end of the alphabet. Now the cosmic conception of Deity, as we shall hereafter see, being planted in the region of the Unknowable, which is coextensive with that of the Knowable, has no such precarious tenure, and all that the progress of discovery can do is to enlarge and strengthen it. But the anthropomorphic conception, lodged in that ever diminishing area of the Knowable which is to-day unknown, is driven from outpost to outpost, and robbed of some part of its jurisdiction by every advance of science. Surely that must be an unworthy conception of

Deity which is confessedly based on those limitations alone of finite phenomenal knowledge, which each day's experience proves more and more clearly to be but temporary. Surely the teleological hypothesis is built upon a rotten foundation, when it has to dread the shock of each advancing wave of knowledge. Surely it is no less irreverent than unphilosophical to rest our faith in God's existence upon the alleged impossibility of interpreting in terms of matter and motion the beginnings of life, the cross-relations between marsupials and monodelphia, or the structure of the ears and eyes of a cephalopod.

Further to develope this argument would be premature, in the absence of explanations to be given in the next chapter. Contenting ourselves for the present with this brief indication, let us now approach the subject somewhat more closely, and examine certain metaphysical arguments upon which it has lately been sought to base an elaborate teleological theory. The "Inquiry into the Theories of History," by Mr. William Adam, presents us with what is probably the last form of the attempt to carry on scientific research by theological methods, and two or three of its arguments may here be fitly noticed, as typical of the entire class to which they belong.

Mr. Adam accepts, with some qualifications, the doctrine of Descartes and Spinoza, that causes resemble their effects. He holds that physical, intellectual, and moral causes respectively resemble their physical, intellectual, and moral effects; and hence infers that the Deity, as a moral and intellectual cause, must resemble the effect Man — must therefore purpose, contrive, and exert volition. The conclusion would have more weight, were it not so manifestly begged in the premise. Next, even in this modified shape, the rule that causes resemble their effects is hampered by awkward exceptions, in dealing with which Mr. Adam has not been fortunate. Assuming, for example, that heat is the

cause of steam, he maintains the likeness of the cause to its effect, on the ground that both are *in a state* of molecular agitation! The mental confusion which resulted in this extraordinary statement, is still more explicitly revealed in the assertion that "heat is like steam, as being both physical objects." So, then, we get some conception of the kind of science with which anthropomorphism is practically compatible. Heat, it seems, is a physical object in a state of molecular agitation!! The ordinary physicist will certainly object that heat, being the state of molecular agitation, can hardly be called, with propriety, the physical object. And the logician will add that, even if it could be so called, an argument would hardly be thought convincing which should rest upon the alleged resemblance of a billiard-table to a rhinoceros—yet these are both physical objects. Mr. Adam is equally unhappy in his answer to Mr. Mill's humorous criticism of Descartes. Parodying the celebrated maxim,—*Si enim ponamus aliquid in idea reperiri quod non fuerit in ejus causa, hoc igitur habet a nihilo,* Mr. Mill observes that "if there be pepper in the soup, there must be pepper in the cook who made it, since otherwise the pepper would be without a cause." Mr. Adam's reply savours strongly of mediæval realism. The cook, he says, is not indeed the efficient cause of the pepper, but the cook's *intelligence* is the efficient cause of the *intelligence* displayed in the mixture of the ingredients of the soup—so that even here the cause is like the effect! Comment is not needed. Human ingenuity is indeed pushed to the limit of its tether, when by a play upon words it tries to liken a physical combination of salt, pepper, and meat-juice to an intellectual coordination of experiences.

Apart from these ill-chosen and ill-managed examples, the Cartesian argument, as modified by Mr. Adam, appears to stand as follows:—When a physical event, such as the pulling of a trigger, is followed by another physical event,

such as the firing of a pistol, the antecedent resembles the consequent, since both are physical events. When an intellectual event, such as the rising into consciousness of the idea of Hamlet, is followed by another intellectual event, such as the ideal representation of a crowded theatre, the antecedent resembles the consequent, since both are intellectual events. When a moral event, such as a fit of ungovernable passion, is followed by another moral event, such as a bitter sense of remorse, the antecedent is like the consequent, since both are moral events. Therefore the primal Cause, antecedent to the whole compound series of intellectual and moral events, must be intellectual and moral in its nature.

Underneath this whole argument there lies an ill-concealed *petitio principii*. Three parallel lines of causal sequence being set up, it is unwarrantably assumed that causal relations hold only between the successive members of each separate series, or in other words, that there are no causal relations between the members of one series and the members of another. A single instance of causal relation between a material event and an intellectual or emotional event—such as the relation between certain atmospheric undulations communicated from violin-strings to the auditory nerve, and the consequent recognition of the triad of A-minor, with the accompanying pleasurable feeling—is fatal to the argument. Waiving this objection, however, and for the moment admitting that the universe, as containing intellectual and moral phenomena, requires an intellectual and moral Cause; we may note that the argument proves altogether too much. Since the universe contains material, as well as psychical phenomena, its First Cause, according to Mr. Adam's argument, must partake of all the differential qualities of those phenomena. If it reasons and wills, like the higher animals, it must also, like minerals, plants, and the lowest animals, be unintelligent and unendowed with the power of volition,—

which requires in the First Cause a more than Hegelian capacity for uniting contradictory attributes. Else we must suppose its causal action to be confined to man, and those other animals which manifest intelligence and volition, while the rest of the universe either seeks another First Cause, or goes without one. All these are alike conclusions which philosophy cannot for a moment tolerate, and which are as shocking to science as to religion.

A still more fatal criticism remains to be made. Considered as a modification of the Cartesian doctrine, Mr. Adam's theory is entirely illegitimate: it is the product of a gross misconception of the Cartesian doctrine. All these causes and effects, so carefully but unskilfully compared by Mr. Adam, are *phenomenal* antecedents and consequents; and even supposing the universal resemblance of phenomenal causes to phenomenal effects to be fully made out, the anthropomorphic argument is not helped in the least. Until a *phenomenal* effect can be brought into juxtaposition and compared with its *noumenal* cause, the argument has no logical validity; but, because of the relativity of all knowledge, this can never be done. To call the First Cause a phenomenon is to make a statement that is self-contradictory; since phenomena exist only by virtue of their relation to human (or animal) consciousness. The First Cause being absolute and infinite, is a noumenon, and no amount of resemblance, alleged or proved, between various orders of its phenomenal effects, can bear witness to any resemblance between a phenomenal effect and the noumenal Cause. The phenomena of motion, for example, exist as phenomena only in so far as they are cognized; and the very constitution of the thinking process renders it impossible for us to assert similarity between the phenomenon and the thing in itself. Indeed a comparison between the various phenomena of motion gives us good ground for believing that there can be no such thing as resemblance between the phenomena and

their noumenal cause. At the beginning of this work it was shown that the objective reality underlying the phenomena of heat, light, actinism, and mechanical vibration, cannot be held to resemble one of these sets of phenomena more than another, and accordingly cannot be held to resemble any of them. And this conclusion, thus forced upon us by concrete examples, is the only one consistent with what we know of knowledge. Obviously the phenomena cannot be held to be like the objective reality without ignoring the circumstance that the mind is itself a factor in the process of cognition. Now the Cartesians, with more insight into the exigencies of the case than is shown by Mr. Adam, unflinchingly asserted that phenomenal effects are like noumenal causes,—that whatever is in the subjective conception is also in the objective reality. As a proposition in psychology, this is a denial of the relativity of knowledge. As a canon of logic, this is the proclamation of the subjective method. Hence, though the metaphysician and the theologian may adopt an anthropomorphic hypothesis founded upon such an argument, it is impossible for a scientific philosopher to do so.

The attempt to establish the anthropomorphic hypothesis by means of the volitional theory of causation is, from the scientific point of view, equally futile. From first to last, as was fully demonstrated in the chapter on Causation, the argument of the volitionists is made up of pure assumptions. From the unwarranted ontological postulate that Will is a noumenal or efficient cause of muscular action in animals, it proceeds, by a flagrant *non sequitur*, to the equally unwarranted conclusion that Will is the noumenal or efficient cause of all the dynamic phenomena of the universe, and must therefore be the First Cause. Volition being asserted to be the only source whence motion can originate, it is affirmed that, save on the hypothesis of a Supreme Will, the activity of nature baffles comprehension. The reply of the scientific critic is that, in an ultimate analysis, the activity

of nature does, and must ever, baffle comprehension; and that, upon any hypothesis frameable by our intelligence, whether theistic or non-theistic, the origination of motion must remain not only incomprehensible but inconceivable. Relatively to our finite power of apprehension, motion is to be regarded, like matter, as eternal.[1] The unthinkableness of the creation or destruction of matter or motion is involved in the axiom that force is persistent, which is the fundamental axiom of all science and of Cosmic Philosophy. Whether motion, considered apart from our power of apprehension, ever had a beginning or not, is a question which cannot concern us as scientific thinkers. To assert that it had, is to put into words a hypothesis that cannot be translated into thought, and to assume Volition as its primal antecedent, is to frame an additional hypothesis that is essentially unverifiable. Phenomenally we know of Will only as the cause of certain limited and very peculiar kinds of activity displayed by the nerves and muscles of the higher animals. And to argue from this that all other kinds of activity are equally caused by Will, simply because the primal origination of motion is otherwise inexplicable, is as monstrous a stretch of assumption as can well be imagined. While to contend—as many have done—that because human volitions are attended by a sensation of effort, there is therefore effort in each case of causation, is much like identifying gravitative force with the sensation of weight by which the attempt to overcome it is always accompanied.[2]

[1] Or—to state the same thing in another form—the possibilities of thought are limited by experience; and experience furnishes no data for enabling us to conceive a time, either past or future, when the Unknowable would be objectively manifested to consciousness otherwise than in movements of matter. But this, it should be remembered, applies solely to our powers of conception. Thought is not the measure of things, and where the region of experience is transcended, the test of inconceivability becomes inapplicable. See above, vol. i. p. 11.

[2] See above, vol. i. p. 157.

The last of the *à priori* arguments which it is necessary to notice in this connection, is that which infers the existence of an intelligent Lawgiver from the omnipresence of Law. "The proofs of necessary law and of an intelligent will . . . . remain undeniable," says Mr. Adam, "and no hardihood of assertion can annul them; and when an attempt is made to bring both into logical connection, the mind, not only without violence to its powers, but on the contrary with a clear perception of necessary congruity, believes that law must proceed from a lawgiver, beneficent laws from a moral ruler. To disjoin an intelligent will from necessary law is to shake our confidence in the perpetuity and salutary operation of law itself. The conception of law without will is that of agency without an agent: the conception of will without law is that of an agent without agency. Necessary law is the constant expression of the divine will." Upon this point Mr. Adam repeatedly insists in the course of his work,[1] asserting again and again that, without admitting "this great central conception of a Supreme Will," the laws of nature must for ever remain unintelligible. Let us not fail to note that Mr. Adam's conception of theism, as here illustrated, is far more refined, and far less hostile to scientific inquiry, than the conception of theism embodied in the accepted creeds of theologians, and officially defended from the pulpit. Those who adopt Mr. Adam's conception will, if consistent, welcome, instead of opposing, every scientific interpretation of phenomena hitherto deemed supernatural; since, in the above passage, God is clearly regarded as manifesting himself in order and not in disorder, in method and not in caprice, in law and not in miracle. With this view our Cosmic Philosophy thoroughly coincides; and, eliminating the anthropomorphism from Mr. Adam's statement, I, for one, will heartily join in the assertion that

[1] Adam, *Theories of History*, pp. 92, 130, 180, 189, 209, 222, 281, 284, 404. The passage just cited is to be found on p. 192.

"necessary law is the constant expression of the divine *working*." But the connection asserted between universal law and a supreme quasi-human Will, is one which a scientific philosophy cannot admit, for it rests upon a mere verbal equivocation. The inference from community of name to community of nature, however appropriate it might have seemed to the realists of the twelfth century, is in our day hardly admissible. Because the word "law" is used to describe alike the generalizations of Kepler and the statutes enacted by a legislative body, we must not infer, with a *naïveté* worthy of the schoolmen, that whatever is true of the one will always be true of the other. That the laws of Justinian emanated from a lawgiver is no reason for believing the same to have been the case with the law of gravitation; for the former were edicts enjoining obedience, while the latter is but a generalized expression of the manner in which certain phenomena occur. A law of nature, as formulated in a scientific treatise, is a statement of facts, and nothing more. Expressed in the indicative mood, it has nothing whatever to do with the imperative. Science knows nothing of a celestial Ukase compelling the earth to gravitate toward the sun. We know that it does so gravitate with a certain intensity, and that is the whole story. Nevertheless, so strong is the realistic tendency that, in speaking of laws of nature, the most careful writers too seldom avoid "a tacit reference to the original sense of the word *law*, . . . the expression of the will of a superior."[1] Indeed, it is immediately after defining a law as "a general name for certain phenomena of the same kind, which regularly recur under the same circumstances," that Mr. Adam alludes to "the Supreme Will which *subjects* (!) all phenomena to law, and *colligates all laws into a universe* (!)." Upon such a confusion of ideas, and amid such a chaos of terminology, is this whole argument, so far as concerns theism, unsuspectingly reared.

[1] Mill, *System of Logic*, vol. i. p. 348.

Strip the phrase "law of nature" of this inherent ambiguity, substitute for it the equivalent phrase, "order of sequence among certain phenomena," and the anthropomorphic inference so confidently drawn from it at once disappears.

Viewed in close connection with the Doctrine of Evolution, this scholastic argument from the Law to the Lawgiver lands us amid strange and terrible embarrassments. For what is a law, in the sense in which the word is used by legislators? It is a set of relations established by the community, or by some superior mind representing and guiding the community, in correspondence with certain environing circumstances. Certain phenomena of crime, for example, tend to detract from the fulness of life of society, and to balance these phenomena a certain force of public opinion is embodied in an edict prescribing due punishments for the crimes in question. Or—slightly to vary the definition and make it more comprehensive—a law is the embodiment of a certain amount of psychical energy, directed towards the securing of the highest attainable fulness of social life. Now if, on the strength of an ambiguous terminology, we proceed to regard the "laws" of nature as edicts enjoined upon matter and motion by a personal Ruler, shall we also, as we are logically bound to do, carry with us the conceptions of legislation with which the Doctrine of Evolution has supplied us? Shall we say that the infinite Deity adjusts inner relations to external contingencies?

Here we come upon the brink of the abyss into which the anthropomorphic hypothesis must precipitate us, if instead of passively acquiescing in it as a vague authoritative formula, we analyze it with the scientific appliances at our command. To those who have acquired some mastery of the physical truths upon which our Cosmic Philosophy is based, the doctrine not only ceases to be intellectually consoling, but becomes a source of ungovernable disturbance. For to represent the Deity as a person who thinks, contrives,

and legislates, is simply to represent him as a product of evolution. The definition of intelligence being "the continuous adjustment of specialized inner relations to specialized outer relations," it follows that to represent the Deity as intelligent is to surround Deity with an environment, and thus to destroy its infinity and its self-existence. The eternal Power whereof the web of phenomena is but the visible garment becomes degraded into a mere strand in the web of phenomena; and the Cosmos, in exchange for the loss of its infinite and inscrutable God, receives an anomalous sovereign of mythologic pedigree.

Nor can the theologian find a ready avenue of escape from these embarrassments in the assumption that there is such a thing as disembodied intelligence which is not definable as a correspondence between an organism and its environment, and which is therefore not a product of evolution. Experience does not afford the data for testing such a hypothesis, and to meet it with denial would accordingly be unphilosophic in the extreme. That there may be such a thing as disembodied or unembodied Spirit will be denied by no one, save by those shallow materialists who fancy that the possibilities of existence are measured by the narrow limitations of their petty knowledge. But such an admission can be of no use to the theologian in establishing his teleological hypothesis. For even granting the existence of such unembodied Spirit, the moment we ascribe to it intelligence we are using words to which experience has assigned definite meanings, and we are not at liberty to play fast and loose with these meanings. When we speak of "intelligence," we either mean nothing at all, or we mean that which we know as intelligence. But that which we know as intelligence implies a circumscribed and limited form of Being adapting its internal processes to other processes going on beyond its limits. Save as describing such a correspondence between circumscribed Being and its

environment, the word "intelligence" has no meaning whatever, and to employ it is simply to defy logic and insult common-sense. In ascribing intelligence to unembodied Spirit, we are either using meaningless jargon, or we are implicitly surrounding unembodied Spirit with an environment of some kind, and are thus declaring it to be both limited and dependent. The assumption of disembodied intelligence, therefore leaves the fundamental difficulty quite untouched.

Thus in default of all tenable *à priori* support for the anthropomorphic hypothesis, it must be left to rest, if it is to be entertained at all, upon its ancient inductive basis. In spite of the difficulties encompassing the conception, we may fairly admit that if the structure of the universe presents unmistakeable evidences of divine contrivance or forethought, these evidences may be received in verification of the hypothesis which ascribes to God a quasi-human nature. And thus the possible establishment of that hypothesis must depend upon the weight accorded to the so-called "evidences of design."

From the dawn of philosophic discussion, Pagan and Christian, Trinitarian and Deist, have appealed with equal confidence to the harmony pervading nature as the surest foundation of their faith in an intelligent and beneficent Ruler of the universe. We meet with the argument in the familiar writings of Xenophon and Cicero, and it is forcibly and eloquently maintained by Voltaire as well as by Paley, and, with various modifications, by Agassiz as well as by the authors of the Bridgewater Treatises. One and all they challenge us to explain, on any other hypothesis than that of creative design, these manifold harmonies, these exquisite adaptations of means to ends, whereof the world is admitted to be full, and which are especially conspicuous among the phenomena of life. Until the establishment of the Doctrine of Evolution, the glove thus thrown, age after age, into the

arena of philosophic controversy, was never triumphantly taken up. It was Mr. Darwin who first, by his discovery of natural selection, supplied the champions of science with the resistless weapon by which to vanquish, in this their chief stronghold, the champions of theology. And this is doubtless foremost among the causes of the intense hostility which all consistent theologians feel towards Mr. Darwin. This antagonism has been generated, not so much by the silly sentimentalism which regards the Darwinian theory as derogatory to human dignity; not so much by the knowledge that the theory is incompatible with that ancient Hebrew cosmogony which still fascinates the theological imagination; as by the perception, partly vague and partly definite, that in natural selection there has been assigned an adequate cause for the marvellous phenomena of adaptation, which had formerly been regarded as clear proofs of beneficent creative contrivance. It needs but to take into the account the other agencies in organic evolution besides the one so admirably illustrated by Mr. Darwin, it needs but to remember that life is essentially a process of equilibration, both direct and indirect, in order to be convinced that the Doctrine of Evolution has once for all deprived natural theology of the materials upon which until lately it subsisted.[1]

These apparent indications of creative forethought are just so many illustrations of the scientific theorem that life, whether physical or psychical, is the continuous adjustment of inner relations to outer relations. "On this fact," says Mr. Barratt, "depends the usual argument to prove the existence of God from design or final *causes*; the whole strength of which is produced by a mere verbal sleight of

[1] That Darwinism has given the death-blow to teleology is admitted by Schleiden,—an unwilling witness. See Büchner, *Die Darwinsche Theorie*, p. 159. Haeckel also says:—"Wir erblicken darin [in Darwin's discovery] den definitiven Tod aller teleologischen und vitalistischen Beurtheilung der Organismen." *Generelle Morphologie der Organismen*, tom. i. p. 160.

tongue—by calling an effect a cause. Any combination of laws would produce its own proper results: hence under any constitution of the universe, good or bad, possible or impossible, as it may seem to us, it would always be true that 'whatever is, is right.' To give an instance—the particular laws of our present universe bring about night, they also cause the phenomenon sleep in animated creatures: these two naturally suit each other, being different results of the same laws—just as any two propositions in Euclid agree together. But to say that either is the final cause of the other is to transfer an idea derived from one part of ourselves, our motives to action, to an entirely different part of ourselves, our primary laws of sensation. *The earth is suited to its inhabitants because it has produced them, and only such as suit it live.*"[1] This last statement, which I have italicized, is the triumphant answer with which science meets the challenge of natural theology. It is not that the environment has been adapted to the organism by an exercise of creative intelligence and beneficence, but it is that the organism is necessarily fitted to the environment because the fittest survive. In no way can the contrast between theology and science, between Anthropomorphism and Cosmism, be more clearly illustrated than in this antithesis. Let us now pursue the argument somewhat farther into detail, but slightly changing for a moment the point of view, in order that we may not only show the superiority of the scientific explanation, but may also show how the anthropomorphic theory finds its apparent justification. A theory may be shattered by refutation; but in order to demolish it utterly it must be accounted for. We shall see that from the very constitution of the human mind, and by reason of the process whereby intelligence has arisen, we are likely everywhere to meet with apparent results of creative forethought; and that thus

[1] *Physical Ethics*, p. 33.

in the evolution of intelligence itself these phenomena find their only satisfactory explanation.

In the chapter on the Evolution of Mind it was shown that the intelligence of any man consists, partly of inner relations adjusted from moment to moment in conformity with the outer relations present in his own environment, and partly of organized and integrated inner relations bequeathed him by countless generations of ancestors, brute and human, and adjusted to the outer relations constantly presented in innumerable ancestral environments. Throughout all time, therefore, since intelligence first appeared upon the earth, the world of conceptions has been maintained in more or less complete correspondence with the world of phenomena. Just as in the mental evolution of each individual there is preserved a certain degree of harmony with the mental evolution of contemporary and surrounding individuals, so the total evolution of intelligence has kept pace more or less evenly with the changes of the environment with which it has interacted. Sense after sense has assumed distinct existence in response to stimuli from without. One set of experiences after another has been coordinated in harmony with combinations existing without. Emotion after emotion has been slowly generated in conformity with the necessities entailed by outward circumstances. And thus the contemplating mind and the world of phenomena contemplated are, if I may so express it, tuned in mysterious unison.

Let us now inquire into the bearing of this fact upon the origin and apparent justification of the teleological theory. We have seen that man has from the earliest times been wont to project ideally his personality into the external world, assimilating the forces of physical nature to the forces displayed in his own volitions, and with unrestrained fancy multiplying likenesses of his own intelligence as means whereby to render comprehensible the agencies ever at work around him. Stronger in the ages of primeval fetishism

than at any subsequent time, this aboriginal tendency is nevertheless not yet quite fully overcome. Even as in the crying of an infant at sight of a stranger may be seen still feebly surviving the traces of feelings organized in the race at a time when the strange meant the dangerous, so likewise may we detect evanescent symptoms of a fetishistic style of reasoning in many highly subtilized ontological theories now in vogue; of which the volitional theory of causation, above dealt with, is a notable example. This archaic mode of reasoning, now become exceptional, was once universal. Now applied only to the most abstruse problems, it was at first equally employed in the solution of the simplest. Storm and sunshine, as well as defeat and victory, were regarded as the manifestations of superhuman volition and the achievements of superhuman intelligence. But scientific generalization, steadily arranging in correlated groups phenomena which had hitherto seemed isolated and lawless, was followed by the generalization of presiding divinities. And this went on until, in comparatively modern times the habit of viewing nature as an organic whole has resulted in monotheism. As the most prominent result of this generalizing process we have seen slowly going on an elimination, from the objects of men's worship, of the less noble qualities originally ascribed to them. One by one the grosser sensual passions, the emotions least worthy of reverence, and intellectual shortcomings, such as the liability to make mistakes and to be overreached, have been omitted from the conception of Deity. And the culmination of this purifying process is to be seen in the Deity of the modern metaphysician, which is little more than an abstract embodiment of reason and volition. But in spite of all this progressive change in the form of the conception, its substance still remains the same. It is still the human personality, however refined and etherealized, which is appealed to alike as the source and as the explanation of all phenomena. It

is the primitive fetishistic habit of thought, however modified by conflict with scientific habits, which furtively leads us to regard volition as supplying the nexus between cause and effect, and to interpret the harmonious correspondences in nature as results of creative contrivance and indications of creative purpose.

Such being the origin of the teleological hypothesis, its apparent warrant is to be sought in the facts above recounted with respect to the evolution of intelligence. It is the complex and organized correspondence of the mind with its environment, which seems to furnish inductive justification to the thinker who is predisposed to see in nature the workings of a mind like his own. Arranging and combining various experiences received from without, adjusting new inner relations to outer relations established from time immemorial, man reacts upon the environment, and calls into being new aggregations of matter, new channels of motion, new reservoirs of energy. He does not perceive and reflect only—he also contrives and invents. As often as he builds an engine, launches a ship, paints a picture, moulds a statue, or composes a symphony, he creates in the environment new relations tallying with those present within himself. And then, by a natural but deceptive analogy, he infers that what has taken place in the tiny portion of the universe which owns himself as its designer, must also have taken place throughout the whole. All the relations externally existing, he interprets as consequent upon primordial relations shaped in a mind similar to his own. By a subtle realism, he projects the idea of himself out upon the field of phenomena, and deals with it henceforth as an objective reality. Human intelligence made the watch, therefore superhuman intelligence made the flower. Human volitions bring to pass wars and revolutions, divine volitions therefore cause famine and pestilence. So when, in the pervading unity which amid endless variety of detail binds into a synthetic whole the classes and genera of the

organic world, an earnest and reverent thinker, like Agassiz, beholds the work of omnipresent thought, he is but unawares contemplating his own personality reflected before him, and mistaking, Narcissus-like, a mirrored image for a substantial object of adoration. Thus is explained, even while it is refuted, the famous argument of the watch, with all its numerous kindred. In the anthropomorphic hypothesis, the bearings of the inner and the outer worlds are exactly reversed. It is not the intelligence which has made the environment, but it is the environment which has moulded the intelligence. In the mint of nature, the coin Mind has been stamped; and theology, perceiving the likeness of the die to its impression, has unwittingly inverted the causal relation of the two, making Mind, archetypal and self-existent, to be the die.

Therefore, to cite the language employed with slightly different but kindred intent by Mr. Barratt, "we protest against the reversal of the true order. . . . We must not fall down and worship as the source of our life and virtue the image which our own minds have set up. Why is such idolatry any better than that of the old wood and stone? If we worship the creations of our minds, why not also those of our hands? The one is indeed a more refined self-adoration than the other; but the radical error remains the same in both. The old idolators were wrong, not because they worshipped themselves, but because they worshipped their creation as if it were their creator; and how can any anthropomorphic theory "escape the same condemnation?" [1]

The origin of the teleological hypothesis is thus pointed out, and its plausibility accounted for. On the one hand, the primitive tendency in man to interpret nature anthropomorphically, and his proneness to lend to his own ideas objective embodiment, are facts admitting no dispute. All history teems with evidences of their wide-spread and deep-rooted influence. Has not fetishism been at one time the universal theology, and realism at another time the dominant

[1] *Physical Ethics*, p. 225.

philosophy? On the other hand, it is a corollary from the fundamental laws of life that psychical development has followed the course and been determined by the conditions above described. The view here defended may thus far claim at least equal weight with those which maintain the validity of the teleological hypothesis. But we have next to consider a class of phenomena, in the explanation of which that hypothesis appears at a signal disadvantage.

The perfect adjustment of inner to outer relations is that which constitutes perfect life. Were no chemical or mechanical relations to arise without the organism, too sudden, too intricate, or too unusual, to be met by internal adaptations, death from disease and accident would no longer occur. Were there no concurrence of phenomena defying interpretation and refusing to be classified, there would be perfect knowledge. Were no desires awakened, save such as might be legitimately gratified by the requisite actions, there would be perfect happiness. That the ultimate state of humanity will be characterized by a relatively close approach to such an equilibrium between external requirements and internal resources, is a belief which, however paradoxical it may seem to a superficial observer, is justified by all that we know of history and of biology. It is with reason that the modern mind sees its Golden Age in the distant future, as the ancient mind saw it in the forgotten past. But however bright and glorious may be the destination of mankind, its onward progress is marked by irksome toil and bitter sorrow. Though like the crusading children, in Arnold's beautiful simile, we may cry from time to time, "Jerusalem is reached!" it is only to be rudely awakened from our delusion —to realize that the goal is yet far off, and that many a weary league must be traversed before we can attain it. Meanwhile, grinding misery is the lot of many, regret and disappointment the portion of all. The life of the wisest man is chiefly made up of lost opportunities, defeated hopes, half-

finished projects, and frequent failure in the ever-renewed strife between good and evil inclinations. So penetrated are the noblest careers by the leaven of selfish folly, that the conscientious biographer is too often constrained to adopt the tone of apology, mingling condemnation with approval. Side by side with deeds of heroism and sympathetic devotion, history is ever recording deeds of violence and selfish oppression. Undisciplined and conflicting desires are continually coming to fruition in hateful and iniquitous actions. The perennial recurrence of war and persecution, the obstinate vitality of such ugly things as despotism, superstition, fraud, robbery, treachery, and bigotry, show how chaotic as yet is the distribution of moral forces. While the prevalence, here and there, of ignorance and poverty, disease and famine, shows how imperfect as yet is our power to adapt ourselves to the changes going on around us.

That this state of things is temporarily necessitated by the physical constitution of the universe and by the process of evolution itself, may readily be granted.[1] The physical ills with which humanity is afflicted are undoubtedly consequent upon the very movement of progress which is bearing it onward toward relative perfection of life, and moral evils likewise are the indispensable concomitants of its slow transition from the primeval state of savage isolation to the ultimate state of civilized interdependence. They are not obstacles to any scientific theory of evolution, nor do they provide an excuse for gloomy cynicism, but should rather be viewed with quiet resignation, relieved by philosophic hopefulness, and enlightened endeavours to ameliorate them. But though

[1] In treating of the special-creation hypothesis (*Principles of Biology*, part iii.) Mr. Spencer calls attention to the numerous cases in which the higher life is sacrificed, without compensation, to the lower, as for example in the case of parasites. This is a formidable objection, not only to the doctrine of special creations, but to anthropomorphic theism in general. But for my present purpose it is quite enough to point out that the constitution of the world is such that even the genesis of higher life involves an enormous infliction of misery upon sentient creatures.

crime and suffering may indeed be destined eventually to disappear, their prevalence throughout the recorded past has none the less been ever the stumbling-block and opprobrium of all anthropomorphic theories of the universe. Just so far as the correspondence between the organism and its environment is complete, does the teleological hypothesis find apparent confirmation. Just so far as the correspondence is incomplete, does it meet with patent contradiction. If harmony and fitness are to be cited as proofs of beneficent design, then discord and unfitness must equally be kept in view as evidences of less admirable contrivance. A scheme which permits thousands of generations to live and die in wretchedness, cannot, merely by providing for the well-being of later ages, be absolved from the alternative charge of awkwardness or malevolence. If there exist a personal Creator of the universe who is infinitely intelligent and powerful, he cannot be infinitely good: if, on the other hand, he be infinite in goodness, then he must be lamentably finite in power or in intelligence. By this two-edged difficulty, Theology has ever been foiled. Vainly striving to elude the dilemma, she has at times sought refuge in optimism; alleging the beneficent results of suffering and the evanescent character of evil, as if to prove that suffering and evil do not really exist. Usually, however, she has taken the opposite course, postulating distinct supernatural sources for the evil and the good.[1] From the Jötuns and Vritras of

[1] "Οὐκ ἄρα πάντων γε αἴτιον τὸ ἀγαθόν, ἀλλὰ τῶν μὲν εὖ ἐχόντων αἴτιον, τῶν δὲ κακῶν ἀναίτιον. Οὐδ' ἄρα ὁ Θεός, ἐπειδὴ ἀγαθός, πάντων ἂν εἴη αἴτιος, ὡς οἱ πολλοὶ λέγουσιν, ἀλλ' ὀλίγων μὲν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις αἴτιος, πολλῶν δὲ ἀναίτιος· πολὺ γὰρ ἐλάττω τἀγαθὰ τῶν κακῶν ἡμῖν· καὶ τῶν μὲν ἀγαθῶν οὐδένα ἄλλον αἰτιατέον, τῶν δὲ κακῶν ἄλλ' ἅττα δεῖ ζητεῖν τὰ αἴτια, ἀλλ' οὐ τὸν Θεόν." Plato, *Republic*, ii. 18 (Bekker). He goes on to refute the Homeric conception of the two jars, *Iliad*, xxiv. 660. See also Aristotle, *Metaphysica*, A. p. 984. b. 17; and compare the views of James Mill, in J. S. Mill's *Autobiography*, p. 40. For those who may wish to revive the Manichæan doctrine, an excellent point of departure has been afforded by Mr. Martineau, in his suggestion that the primary qualities of matter constitute a "datum objective to God," who, "in shaping the orbits out of immensity, and determining seasons out

early Aryan mythology, down to the multiform Manichæism of later times, may be seen the innumerable vestiges of her fruitless attempts to reconcile the fact of the existence of evil with the hypothesis of the infinite power and benevolence of a personal Deity.

It is not for the theologian to seek to stifle such objections by telling us that, in raising them, we are blasphemously judging of the character of the Deity by human standards. Nor is it for him to silence us by pointing to the wondrous process of evolution as itself the working out of a mighty Teleology of which our finite understandings can fathom but the scantiest rudiments.[1] As we shall see in the fifth chapter, the process of evolution, when reverently treated with the aid of such scientific resources as we possess, and when disencumbered of anthropomorphic hypotheses, leads us in the way of no such fearful dilemma as the one by which we are now encountered. It is theology alone which drives us to the brink of this fathomless abyss, by insisting upon the representation of the Deity as a person endowed with anthropomorphic attributes. If goodness and intelligence are to be ascribed to the Deity, it must be the goodness and intelligence of which we have some rudimentary knowledge as manifested in humanity: otherwise our hypothesis is resolved into unmeaning verbiage. "If," as Mr. Mill observes, "in

of eternity, *could but follow* the laws of curvature, measure, and proportion." *Essays, Philosophical and Theological*, pp. 163, 164. In this way Mr. Martineau preserves the quasi-human character of God in the only way in which (as I maintain) it can be preserved,—namely, by sacrificing his Omnipotence. In seeking to escape from Mr. Spencer's doctrine of the Unknowable, Mr. Martineau succeeds only in positing, in his "objective datum," an ulterior Unknowable, by which God's power is limited, and which *ex hypothesi* is not divine. This brings us directly back to Ormuzd and Ahriman. See Mr. Spencer's remarks, *Fortnightly Review*, Dec. 1873; vol. xiv. N.S. pp. 726—728.

[1] For by taking such ground as this, he would virtually abandon his anthropomorphic hypothesis, and concede all that is demanded by the Cosmist. For this conception of teleology implied in the process of evolution, see Huxley, *Critiques and Addresses*, p. 306.

ascribing goodness to God I do not mean what I mean by goodness; if I do not mean the goodness of which I have some knowledge, but an incomprehensible attribute of an incomprehensible substance, which for aught I know may be a totally different quality from that which I love and venerate—what do I mean by calling it goodness? and what reason have I for venerating it? To say that God's goodness may be different in kind from man's goodness, what is it but saying, with a slight change of phraseology, that God may possibly not be good?" With Mr. Mill, therefore, "I will call no Being good, who is not what I mean when I apply that epithet to my fellow-creatures." And, going a step farther, I will add that it is impossible to call that Being good, who, existing prior to the phenomenal universe, and creating it out of the plenitude of infinite power and foreknowledge, endowed it with such properties that its material and moral development must inevitably be attended by the misery of untold millions of sentient creatures for whose existence their Creator is ultimately alone responsible. *In short, there can be no hypothesis of a "moral government" of the world, which does not implicitly assert an immoral government.* As soon as we seek to go beyond the process of evolution disclosed by science, and posit an external Agency which is in the slightest degree anthropomorphic, we are obliged either to supplement and limit this Agency by a second one that is diabolic, or else to include elements of diabolism in the character of the first Agency itself. And in the latter case the blasphemy—if we choose to call it so—lies at the door of those who, by urging upon us their anthropomorphic hypothesis, oblige us to judge the character of the Deity by human standards; and not at the door of those who simply reveal the true character of that anthropomorphic hypothesis by setting forth its hidden implications.

Thus from every point of view the doctrine of a quasi-human God appears equally unsatisfactory to the scientific thinker. It rests upon unsupported theories of causation, upon a mistaken conception of law, and upon a teleological hypothesis whose origin renders it suspicious, and whose evidence fails it in the hour of need. The inductive proof alleged in its support is founded upon the correspondence between the organism and the environment, and where the correspondence fails, just there the doctrine is left helpless. The Doctrine of Evolution thus not only accounts for the origin and apparent justification of the anthropomorphic theory, but also reveals its limitations. And when thus closely scrutinized, the hypothesis appears as imperfect morally as it is intellectually. It is shown to be as incompatible with the truest religion as it is with the truest science. Instead of enlightening, it only mystifies us; and, so far from consoling, it tends to drive us to cynical despair.

In spite of all the care observed in the wording of the foregoing argument—a care directed toward the bringing out of my entire thought, and not toward the concealing of any portion of it—the views here maintained will doubtless by many be pronounced "covertly atheistical." It must be reserved for the next three chapters to demonstrate that they are precisely the reverse, and that the intelligent acceptance of them must leave us in an attitude toward God more reverential than that which is assumed by those who still cling to the anthropomorphic hypothesis. At present we must be content with noting that our choice is no longer between an intelligent Deity and none at all: it lies between a limited Deity and one that is without limit. For, as the foregoing discussion has plainly shown, and as must appear from every similar discussion of the subject in terms of the Doctrine of Evolution, an anthropomorphic God cannot be conceived as an infinite God. *Personality* and *Infinity* are terms expressive of ideas which are mutually incompatible. The pseud-

idea "Infinite Person" is neither more nor less unthinkable than the pseud-idea "Circular Triangle." As Spinoza somewhere says, *Determinatio negatio est*,—to define God is to deny Him; and such being the case, what can be more irrational than to insist upon thought and volition, phenomena only known to exist within quite narrow limitations, as the very nature and essence of the infinite Deity? What theory of physical or moral phenomena, built upon such an inadequate basis, can be other than unsound and misleading? What wonder if it continually land us in awkward and conflicting conclusions, painful to us alike as inquiring and as religious beings? As Goethe has profoundly said, "Since the great Being whom we name the Deity manifests himself not only in man, but in a rich and powerful Nature, and in mighty world-events, a representation of Him, framed from human qualities, cannot of course be adequate, and the thoughtful observer will soon come to imperfections and contradictions, which will drive him to doubt—nay, even to despair—unless he be either little enough to let himself be soothed by an artful evasion, or great enough to rise to a higher point of view."[1] To those whom the habits of thought which science nurtures have led to believe in the existence of an all-pervading and all-sustaining Power, eternally and everywhere manifested in the phenomenal activity of the universe, alike the cause of all and the inscrutable essence of all, without whom the world would be as the shadow of a vision, and thought itself would vanish,—to these the conception of a presiding anthropomorphic Will is a gross and painful conception. Even were it the highest phenomenal conception which can be framed, it would still be inadequate to represent the Ineffable Reality. But we do not and cannot know even that it is the highest. Hegel was rash with all the metaphysician's rashness when he said that Humanity

[1] Eckermann, vol. ii. p. 357.

is the most perfect type of existence in the universe. Our knowledge of the Cosmos has been aptly compared by Carlyle to the knowledge which a minnow in its native creek has of the outlying ocean. Of the innumerable combinations of matter and incarnations of force which are going on within the bounds of space, we know, save a few of the simplest, those only which are confined to the surface of our little planet. And to assert that among them all there may not be forms of existence as far transcending humanity as humanity itself transcends the crystal or the sea-weed, is certainly the height of unwarrantable assumption.

> "Think you this mould of hopes and fears
> Could find no statelier than his peers
> In yonder hundred million spheres?"

Until our knowledge becomes coextensive with the entire world of phenomena, questions like these must remain unanswered. Meanwhile we may rest assured that, could we solve them all, the state of the case would not be essentially altered. Our conception might be relatively far loftier, but from the absolute point of view it would be equally beneath the Reality. We are therefore forced to conclude that the process of deanthropomorphization which has from the first characterized the history of philosophic development must still continue to go on; until the Intelligent Will postulated by the modern theologian shall have shared the fate of the earlier and still more imperfect symbols whereby finite man has vainly tried to realize that which must ever transcend his powers of conception.

CHAPTER III.

COSMIC THEISM.

THE conclusions reached in the foregoing chapter were purely negative, and would therefore be very unsatisfactory if we were obliged to rest in them as final. Upon the religious side of philosophy as well as upon its scientific side, the mind needs some fundamental theorem with reference to which it may occupy a positive attitude. According to the theory of life and intelligence expounded in previous chapters, mere scepticism can discharge but a provisional and temporary function. To the frivolously-minded the mere negation of belief may be in no wise distressing; but to the earnest inquirer the state of scepticism is accompanied by pain, which, here as elsewhere, is only subserving its proper function when it stimulates him to renewed search after a positive result. In the present transcendental inquiry it may indeed at first sight seem impossible to arrive at any positive result whatever, without ignoring the relativity of knowledge and proving recreant to the rigorous requirements of the objective method. Nevertheless, as was hinted at the close of the preceding chapter, this is not the case. Although the construction of a theology, or science of Deity, is a task which exceeds the powers of human intelligence, there is nevertheless one supremely important theorem in which science

and religion find their permanent reconciliation, and by the assertion of which the mind is brought into a positive attitude of faith with reference to the Inscrutable Power manifested in the universe. The outcome of the present argument is not Atheism or Positivism, but a phase of Theism which is higher and purer, because relatively truer, than the anthropomorphic phase defended by theologians.

This all-important theorem in which science and religion are reconciled, is neither more nor less than the theorem which alone gives complete expression to the truth that all knowledge is relative. In the first chapter of this work it was elaborately proved that as soon as we attempt to frame any hypothesis whatever concerning the Absolute, or that which exists out of relation to our consciousness, we are instantly checkmated by alternative impossibilities of thought, and when we seek to learn why this is so, we are taught by a psychologic analysis that, from the very organization of our minds, and by reason of the very process by which intelligence has been evolved, we can form no cognition into which there do not enter the elements of *likeness*, *difference*, and *relation*,—so that the Absolute, as presenting none of these elements, is utterly and for ever unknowable. Translating this conclusion into more familiar language, we found it to mean, *first*, "that the Deity, in so far as absolute and infinite, is inscrutable by us, and that every hypothesis of ours concerning its nature and attributes can serve only to illustrate our mental impotence,"—and, *secondly*, "that the Universe in itself is likewise inscrutable; that the vast synthesis of forces without us, which in manifold contact with us is from infancy till the close of life continually arousing us to perceptive activity, can never be known by us as it exists objectively, but only as it affects our consciousness."[1]

These are the closely-allied conclusions which were reached

[1] See above, vol. i. p. 15.

in our opening discussion, But since such abstruse theorems need to be taken one by one into the mind, and allowed one after the other to dwell there for a while, in order to be duly comprehended, it did not then seem desirable to encumber the exposition with any reference to the third statement in which these two are made to unite; nor, indeed, would it have been possible to illustrate adequately this third statement until we had defined our position in relation to the questions of phenomenality, of causation and deanthropomorphization, of the persistence of force, and of the evolution of the phenomenal world. But now, having obtained definite conclusions upon these points, we are at last enabled to present the case as a whole. Having seen that in certain senses the Deity and the Cosmos are alike inscrutable, let us now see if there is any sense in which it may be legitimately said that the Unknowable contained in our first theorem is identical with the Unknowable contained in our second theorem.

Upon what grounds did we assert the unknowableness of Deity? We were driven to the conclusion that Deity is unknowable, because that which exists independently of intelligence and out of relation to it, which presents neither *likeness*, *difference*, nor *relation*, cannot be cognized. Now by precisely the same process, we were driven to the conclusion that the Cosmos is unknowable, only in so far as it is absolute. It is only as existing independently of our intelligence and out of relation to it, that we can predicate unknowableness of the Cosmos. As manifested to our intelligence, the Cosmos is the world of phenomena,—the realm of the knowable. We know stars and planets, we know the surface of our earth, we know life and mind in their various manifestations, individual and social. But, as we have seen, this vast aggregate of phenomena exists as such only in relation to our intelligence. Its *esse* is *percipi*. To this extent we have gone with Berkeley. But underlying this aggregate of phenomena, to

whose extension we know no limit in space or time, we have found ourselves compelled to postulate an Absolute Reality,—a Something whose existence does not depend on the presence of a percipient mind, which existed before the genesis of intelligence, and would continue to exist though all intelligence were to vanish from the scene. Without making such a postulate, we concluded that it would be impossible to frame any theory whatever, either of subjective or of objective phenomena. Thus the theorem of the relativity of knowledge, when fully expressed, asserts that there exists a Something, of which all phenomena, as presented in consciousness, are manifestations, but concerning which we can know nothing save through its manifestations.

Let us now take a step further, and turning to the conclusions reached in the first chapter of Part II., let us inquire *what is the Force of which we there asserted the persistence?* "It is not," says Mr. Spencer, "the force we are immediately conscious of in our own muscular efforts; for this does not persist. As soon as an outstretched limb is relaxed, the sense of tension disappears. True, we assert that in the stone thrown or in the weight lifted, is exhibited the effect of this muscular tension; and that the force which has ceased to be present in our consciousness, exists elsewhere. But it does not exist elsewhere under any form cognizable by us. It was proved that though, on raising an object from the ground, we are obliged to think of its downward pull as equal and opposite to our upward pull; and though it is impossible to represent these pulls as equal without representing them as like in kind; yet, since their likeness in kind would imply in the object a sensation of muscular tension, which cannot be ascribed to it, we are compelled to admit that force as it exists out of our consciousness, is not force as we know it. Hence the force of which we assert persistence is that Absolute Force of which we are indefinitely conscious as the necessary correlate of the

force we know. Thus by the persistence of force, we really mean the persistence of some Power which transcends our knowledge and conception. The manifestations, as occurring either in ourselves or outside of us, do not persist; but that which persists is the Unknown Cause of these manifestations. In other words, asserting the persistence of force is but another mode of asserting an Unconditioned Reality, without beginning or end." Thus as "a subjective analysis proved that while, by the very conditions of thought, we are prevented from knowing anything beyond relative being; yet that, by these very same conditions of thought, an indefinite consciousness of Absolute Being is necessitated,—so here, by objective analysis, we similarly find that the axiomatic truths of physical science unavoidably postulate Absolute Being as their common basis."[1]

Combining, therefore, these mutually harmonious results, and stating the theorem of the persistence of force in terms of the theorem of the relativity of knowledge, we obtain the following formula:—*There exists a* POWER, *to which no limit in time or space is conceivable, of which all phenomena, as presented in consciousness, are manifestations, but which we can know only through these manifestations.* Here is a formula legitimately obtained by the employment of scientific methods, as the last result of a subjective analysis on the one hand, and of an objective analysis on the other hand. Yet this formula, which presents itself as the final outcome of a purely scientific inquiry, expresses also the fundamental truth of Theism,—the truth by which religious feeling is justified. The existence of God—the supreme truth asserted alike by Christianity and by inferior historic religions—is asserted with equal emphasis by that Cosmic Philosophy which seeks its data in science alone. Thus, as Mr. Lewes long ago observed, the remark of Comte, that the heavens declare no other glory than the glory of Hipparchos and

[1] *First Principles*, pp. 189, 190.

Newton, and such others as have aided in detecting the order of sequence among celestial phenomena, seems as irrational to the scientific inquirer as it seems impious to the religious mind. The Cosmist may assert, as consistently as the Anthropomorphist, that "the undevout astronomer is mad." Though science must destroy mythology, it can never destroy religion; and to the astronomer of the future, as well as to the Psalmist of old, the heavens will declare the glory of God.

Before proceeding further to expound this theorem, in which science and religion find their reconciliation, it is desirable to turn aside for a moment and contrast the views here expounded with the views maintained by Comte concerning the true object of the religious feeling. We shall thus the better elucidate our own position, while once more pointing out the world-wide difference between our philosophy and Positivism. Let us examine the conception of Deity formed by the thinker to whom the heavens manifested no other glory than that of Hipparchos and Newton and their compeers.

Comte recognized, though vaguely, the truth that while the human race in the course of its philosophic evolution must outgrow theology, it can never outgrow religion. He justly maintained that, while the conception of a presiding quasi-human Will must eventually be discarded as an inadequate subjective symbol, there will nevertheless remain to the last the powerful sentiment of devotion which has hitherto attached itself to that anthropomorphic conception, but must finally attach itself to some other conception. Throughout future time, while science is supreme, no less than in that past time when mythology was supreme, there must be a religion, and this religion must have an object. So far the position taken by Comte appears to be defensible enough. But now when we come to consider the object of the religious sentiment in Comte's scheme, we must pro-

nounce his position not only irreconcilable with sound philosophy, but hopelessly retrograde as compared even with the current anthropomorphism. Seeing only the negative side of the theorem of relativity, and thus failing explicitly to recognize the existence of that Absolute Power of which the web of phenomena is but the visible garment, he was obliged to search for his Deity in the realm of the finite and the knowable. Working under these conditions, the result at which he finally arrived appears to have been legitimately evolved from the conception of the aims and scope of philosophy which he had framed in early life, at the very outset of his speculations. The thinker who from the beginning consistently occupied the anthropocentric point of view, who regarded philosophy, not as a unified theory of the Cosmos, but as a unified theory of Man, who depreciated the development theory and the study of sidereal astronomy as interfering with his anthropocentric notions, and to whom the starry heavens declared no glory save that of finite men, arrived ultimately at the deification of Humanity. Comte "refers the obligations of duty, as well as all sentiments of devotion, to a concrete object, at once ideal and real; the Human Race, conceived as a continuous whole, including the past, the present, and the future." "It may not be consonant to usage," observes Mr. Mill, "to call this a religion; but the term, so applied, has a meaning, and one which is not adequately expressed by any other word. Candid persons of all creeds may be willing to admit, that if a person has an ideal object, his attachment and sense of duty towards which are able to control and discipline all his other sentiments and propensities, and prescribe to him a rule of life, that person has a religion. . . . Many indeed may be unable to believe that this object is capable of gathering around it feelings sufficiently strong: but this is exactly the point on which a doubt can hardly remain in an intelligent reader of Comte; and we join with him in contemning, as equally

irrational and mean, the conception of human nature as incapable of giving its love and devoting its existence to any object which cannot afford in exchange an eternity of personal enjoyment."[1] With the general tenour of this passage I heartily agree. I have no sympathy with those critics who maintain that the idea of Humanity is an unworthy idea, incapable of calling forth to a high degree our sentiments of devotion and reverence. No doubt, as the Comtists tell us, the majestic grandeur of which that idea is susceptible can be realized only after long and profound contemplation. And we may perhaps admit, with Mr. Mill, that "ascending into the unknown recesses of the past, embracing the manifold present, and descending into the indefinite and unforeseeable future, forming a collective Existence without assignable beginning or end, it appeals to that feeling of the Infinite which is deeply rooted in human nature." We may still further admit that all morality may be summed up in the disinterested service of the human race,—such being, as already shown (Part II. chap. xxii.), the fundamental principle of the ethical philosophy which is based on the Doctrine of Evolution. And it is, moreover, easy to sympathize with the feeling which led Comte formally to consecrate the memories of the illustrious dead, whose labours have made us what we are; that "communion of saints, unseen yet not unreal," as Carlyle nobly expresses it, "whose heroic sufferings rise up melodiously together unto Heaven, out of all times and out of all lands, as a sacred *Miserere;* their heroic actions also, as a boundless everlasting Psalm of triumph." This intense feeling of the community of the human race, this "enthusiasm of Humanity," as the author of "Ecce Homo" calls it, forms a very considerable part of Christianity when stripped of its mythology, and is one of the characteristics which chiefly

[1] Mill, *Auguste Comte and Positivism*, p. 122.

serve to difference the world-religion of Jesus and Paul from the ethnic religions of antiquity.

Nevertheless, after freely acknowledging all these points of excellence in the Comtean conception, it must still be maintained that Comte's assignment of Humanity as the direct object of religious worship was a retrograde step, when viewed in contrast, not only with the cosmic conception of Deity already clearly foreshadowed by Goethe, but even with the anthropomorphic conception as held by contemporary liberal theologians. A fatal criticism—omitted, and apparently overlooked by Mr. Mill, in his account of the Comtean religion—remains to be made upon it. I do not refer to the difficulty of ascribing godhood to a product of evolution, neither is it necessary to insist upon the marvellous shading-off of collective apehood into Deity which must puzzle the Comtist who stops to confront his theory with the conclusions now virtually established concerning man's origin; though beneath the cavil and sarcasm which cannot be kept from showing itself upon the surface of such objections, there lies just scientific ground of complaint against the Comtean hypothesis. The criticism to which I refer is one the force of which must be acknowledged even by those who have not yet learned to estimate the resistless weight of the evidence by which the development theory is supported. However grand Humanity may be as an object of contemplation, it is still finite, concrete, and knowable. It has had a beginning; in all probability it is destined to have an end. We can no longer, since the Copernican revolution, regard it as the chief and central phenomenon of the universe. We know it but as a local assemblage of concrete phenomena, manifested on the surface of a planet that is itself a lesser member of a single group among innumerable groups of worlds. It is no less significant than amusing that toward the last Comte would fain have banished from astronomy not only the study of the stars, but even the study of those

planets in our own system which do not considerably perturb the motions of the earth. He wished to exclude from science everything which does not conspicuously affect human interests, and everything which by its magnitude dwarfs the conception of Humanity. Far sounder would his views have been had he now and then permitted his thoughts to range to the uttermost imaginable limits of the sidereal universe, and brought himself duly to realize how by the comparison Humanity quite loses its apparent infinitude. Or had he more carefully analyzed the process of human thinking itself, the study of which he stigmatized as "metaphysical" and profitless, he might perhaps have seen that the world of phenomena speaks to us, everywhere and at all times, if we only choose to listen, of an Infinite and Unknowable Reality, whereas the conception of Humanity is but the conception of a Finite and Knowable Phenomenon. Here we touch the bottom of his error. This great Being, says the Comtist, this collective Humanity, is our supreme Being,—"the only one we can know, *therefore* the only one we can worship." On the other hand, the Cosmist asserts, what we know is not what we worship; what we know is matter of science; it is only when science fails, and intelligence is baffled, and the Infinite confronts us, that we cease to analyze and begin to worship. What men have worshipped, from the earliest times, has been not the Known, but the Unknown. Even the primeval savage, who worshipped plants and animals, worshipped them only in so far as their modes of action were mysterious to him,—only in so far as they constituted a part of the weird uninterpreted world by which he was surrounded. As soon as he had generalized the dynamic phenomena presented by the plant or the animal, that is, as soon as it became an object of knowledge, it ceased to be an object of worship. As soon as the grander phenomena of sunrise and sunset, storm and eclipse, had been partially generalized, they were no longer

directly worshipped, but unseen agents were imagined as controlling the phenomena by their arbitrary volitions, and these agents, as being mysterious, were worshipped. So when polytheism began to give place to monotheism, the process was still the same. The visible and tangible world was regarded as the aggregate of things which might be understood; but above and beneath all this was the mysterious aspect of things—the Dynamis, the Demiurgus, the Cause of all, the Ruler of all—and this mighty Something was worshipped. Though theology has all along wrestled with the insoluble problems presented by this supreme Mystery, and, by insisting on divers tangible propositions concerning it, has implicitly asserted that it can be at least partially known; the fact remains that only by being unknown has it continued to be the object of the religious sentiment. Could the theologian have carried his point and constructed a "science of Deity;" could the divine nature have been all expressed in definite formulas, as we express the genesis of vegetation or the revolutions of the planets, worship would have disappeared altogether. Worship is ever the dark side of the shield, of which knowledge is the bright side. It is because science can never explain the universe, it is because the enlarging periphery of knowledge does but reveal from day to day a greater number of points at which we meet the unknowable lying beyond, that religion can never become obsolete. Though we have come to recognize the most refined symbols by which men have sought to render Deity intelligible as inadequate and misleading symbols; though we sacrifice the symbol of personality, because personality implies limitation, and to speak of an infinite personality is to cheat oneself with a phrase that is empty of meaning; yet our recognition of Deity is only the more emphatic. Thus "the object of religious sentiment will ever continue to be that which it has ever been." The God of the

scientific philosopher is still, and must ever be, the God of the Christian, though freed from the illegitimate formulas by the aid of which theology has sought to render Deity comprehensible. What is this wondrous Dynamis which manifests itself to our consciousness in harmonious activity throughout the length and breadth and depth of the universe, which guides the stars for countless ages in paths that never err, and which animates the molecules of the dew-drop that gleams for a brief hour on the shaven lawn, — whose workings are so resistless that we have naught to do but reverently obey them, yet so infallible that we can place our unshaken trust in them, yesterday, to-day, and for ever? When, summing up all activity in one most comprehensive epithet, we call it Force, we are but using a scientific symbol, expressing an affection of our consciousness, which is yet powerless to express the ineffable Reality. To us, therefore, as to the Israelite of old, the very name of Jehovah is that which is not to be spoken. Push our scientific research as far as we may, pursuing generalization until all phenomena, past, present, and future, are embraced within a single formula;—we shall never fathom this ultimate mystery, we shall be no nearer the comprehension of this omnipresent Energy. Here science must ever reverently pause, acknowledging the presence of the mystery of mysteries. Here religion must ever hold sway, reminding us that from birth until death we are dependent on a Power to whose eternal decrees we must submit, to whose dispensations we must resign ourselves, and upon whose constancy we may implicitly rely.

Thus we begin to realize, more vividly than theology could have taught us to realize, the utter absurdity of atheism. Thus is exhibited the prodigious silliness of Lalande, who informed mankind that he had swept the heavens with his telescope and found no God there,—as if God were an optical phenomenon! Thus, too, we see the poverty of that an-

thropomorphism which represents the infinite Deity as acting through calculation and contrivance, just as finite intelligence acts under the limitations imposed by its environment. And thus, finally, we perceive the hopeless error of the Positivist, who would give us a finite knowable, like Humanity, for an object of religious contemplation. The reasoning which demonstrates the relativity of knowledge, demonstrates also the failure of all such attempts to bind up religion in scientific formulas.

The anthropomorphic theist, habitually thinking of God as surrounded and limited by an environment or "objective datum," will urge that the doctrine here expounded is neither more nor less than Pantheism, or the identification of God with the totality of existence. So plausible does this objection appear, at first sight, that those who urge it cannot fairly be accused either of dulness of apprehension or of a desire to misrepresent. Nevertheless it needs but to look sharply into the matter, to see that the doctrine here expounded is utterly opposed to Pantheism. Though the word "pantheism" has been almost as undiscriminatingly bandied about among theological disputants as the word "atheism," it has still a well-defined metaphysical meaning which renders it inapplicable to a religious doctrine based upon the relativity of knowledge. In the pantheistic hypothesis the distinction between absolute and phenomenal existence is ignored, and the world of phenomena is practically identified with Deity. Of this method of treating the problem the final outcome is to be seen in the metaphysics of Hegel, in which the process of evolution, vaguely apprehended, is described absolutely, as a process of change in the Deity, and in which God, as identified with the totality of phenomenal existence, is regarded as continually progressing from a state of comparative imperfection to a state of comparative perfection. Or, in other words—to reduce the case to the shape in which it was presented in the first chapter of this work—the Universe, as

identified with God, is regarded as self-evolved. Such a hypothesis, equally with that of the anthropomorphic theist, implicitly limits Deity with an "objective datum," and renders it finite; for, as Mr. Mansel has observed in another connection, "how can the Infinite become that which it was not from the first?" Obviously for the change an ulterior Cause is needed; and thus the pantheistic hypothesis resolves itself into the affirmation of a limited Knowable conditioned by an unlimited Unknowable,—but it is the former, and not the latter, which it deifies.

Hence to the query suggested at the beginning of this chapter, whether the Deity can be identified with the Cosmos, we must return a very different answer from that returned by the Pantheist. The "open secret," in so far as secret, is God,—in so far as open, is the World; but in thus regarding the ever-changing universe of phenomena as the multiform revelation of an Omnipresent Power, we can in nowise identify the Power with its manifestations. To do so would reduce the entire argument to nonsense. From first to last it has been implied that, while the universe is the manifestation of Deity, yet is Deity something more than the universe.

The doctrine which we have here expounded is, therefore, neither more nor less than Theism, in its most consistent and unqualified form. It is quite true that the word "theism," as ordinarily employed, connotes the ascription of an anthropomorphic personality to the Deity. But in this connotation there has been nothing like fixedness or uniformity. On the other hand the term has become less and less anthropomorphic in its connotations, from age to age, and in the sense in which it is here employed the deanthropomorphizing process is but carried one step farther. There was a time when theism seemed to require that God should be invested with a quasi-human body, just as it now seems to require that God should be invested with quasi-human

intelligence and volition. But for us to concede the justice of the latter restriction would be as unphilosophical as it would have been for the early monotheists to concede the justice of the former. Just as the early Christians persisted in calling themselves theists while asserting that God dwells in a temple not made with hands, so may the modern philosopher persist in calling himself a theist while rejecting the arguments by which Voltaire and Paley have sought to limit and localize the Deity. Following out the parallel, we might characterize the doctrine here expounded as the "higher theism," in contrast with the "lower theism" taught in the current doctrine. Or in conformity with the nomenclature which has already done us such good service, we may still better characterize it as Cosmic Theism, in contrast with the Anthropomorphic Theism of those theologians who limit the Deity by an "objective datum."

This happy expression of Mr. Martineau's lays bare the anthropomorphic hypothesis to the very core, and when thoroughly considered, lets us into the secret of that superficial appearance of antagonism between Science and Religion which has disturbed so many theologians and misled so many scientific inquirers. Though as an act of lip-homage anthropomorphism asserts the infinitude and omnipotence of God, yet in reality it limits and localizes Him. Though it overtly acknowledges that "in Him we live and move and have our being," yet it tacitly belies this acknowledgment by the implication, which runs through all its reasonings, that God is a person localized in some unknown part of space, and that the universe is a "datum objective to God" in somewhat the same sense that a steam-engine is an "objective datum" to the engineer who works it. I do not say that such a conception would be avowed by any theologian: as thus overtly stated, it would no doubt be generally met with an emphatic disclaimer. Nevertheless this conception, whether avowed or disclaimed, lies at the bottom of all the arguments which

theologians urge either against the theory of evolution or against any other theory which extends what is called "the domain of natural law." Take away this conception, and not only do their specific arguments lose all significance, but their entire position becomes meaningless: there ceases to be any reason for their opposing instead of welcoming the new theory. For if "extending the domain of natural law" be equivalent to "extending our knowledge of Divine action," what objection can the theologian logically make to this? Manifestly his hostile attitude is wholly prescribed by his belief, whether tacit or avowed, that the sphere of natural law and the sphere of Divine action are two different spheres, so that whatever is added to the former is taken from the latter. It is assumed that the universe is a sort of lifeless machine, which under ordinary circumstances works along without immediate Divine superintendence, in accordance with what are called natural laws, very much as the steam-engine works when once set going, in accordance with the harmoniously cooperating properties of its material structure. Only by occasional interposition, it is assumed, does God manifest his existence,—by originating organic life, or creating new species out of dust or out of nothing, or by causing prodigies to be performed within historic times for the edification of gaping multitudes. So deep-seated is this assumption—so vitally implicated is it with all the habits of thought which theology nurtures—that we sometimes hear it explicitly maintained that when natural law can be shown to be co-extensive with the whole of nature, then our belief in God will *ipso facto* be extinguished.

Such a position is no doubt as irreligious as it is unscientific; but it is not difficult to see how it has come to be so commonly maintained. Not only is it often apparently justified by the unphilosophical language of scientific men—especially of those shallow writers known as "materialists"—who speak of "natural law" as if it were something dif-

ferent from "Divine action;" but it is also the logical offspring of that primitive fetishism from which all our theology is descended. For as physical generalization began to diminish the sphere of action of the innumerable quasi-human agencies by which fetishism sought to account for natural phenomena, there could hardly fail to arise a belief in some sort of opposition between invariable law and quasi-human agency. On the one hand you have a set of facts that occur in fixed sequences, and so are not the result of anthropomorphic volition; on the other hand you have a set of facts that seem to occur according to no determinable order, and so are the result of anthropomorphic volition. The fetishistic thinker could not, of course, formulate the case in this abstract and generalized way; but there can be no doubt that a crudely felt antithesis of the kind here indicated must have been nearly coeval with the beginnings of physical generalization. Now the gradual summing up and blending together of all the primeval quasi-human agencies into one grand quasi-human Agency, could not at once do away with this antithesis. On the contrary, the antithesis would naturally remain as the generalized opposition between the realm of "invariable law" and the realm of "Divine originality." It would be superfluous to recount the various metaphysical shapes which this conception has assumed, in some of which Nature has even been personified as an intelligent and volitional agency, distinct from God, and working through law while God works through miracle. The result has been that, as scientific generalization has steadily extended the region of "natural law," the region which theology has assigned to "Divine action" has steadily diminished, until theological arguments have become insensibly pervaded by the curious assumption that the greater part of the universe is godless. For it is naïvely asked, if plants and animals have been naturally originated, if the world as a whole has been evolved and not created, and if human

actions conform to law, what is there left for God to do?[1] If not formally repudiated, is he not thrust back into the past eternity, as an unknowable source of things, which is postulated for form's sake, but might as well, for all practical purposes, be omitted?

The reply is that the difficulty is one which theology has created for itself. It is not science, but theology, which has thrust back Divine action to some nameless point in the past eternity and left nothing for God to do in the present world. For the whole difficulty lies in the assumption of the material universe as a "datum objective to God," and in the consequent distinction between "Divine action" and "natural law,"—a distinction for which science is in nowise responsible. The tendency of modern scientific inquiry, whether working in the region of psychology or in that of transcendental physics, is to abolish this distinction, and to regard "natural law" as merely a synonym of "Divine action." And since Berkeley's time the conception of the material universe as a "datum objective to God" is one which can hardly be maintained on scientific grounds. It is scientific inquiry, working quite independently of theology, which has led us to the conclusion that all the dynamic phenomena of Nature constitute but the multiform revelation of an Omnipresent Power that is not identifiable with Nature. And in this conclusion there is no room left for the difficulty which baffles contemporary theology. The scientific inquirer may retort upon the theologian:—Once really adopt the conception of an ever-present God, without whom not a sparrow falls to the ground, and it becomes self-

[1] "Illos omnes Deum aut saltem Dei providentiam tollere putant, qui res et miracula per causas naturales explicant aut intelligere student." Spinoza, *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, vi. *Opera*. iii. 86. "Οὐ γὰρ ἠνείχοντο τοὺς φυσικοὺς καὶ μετεωρολέσχας τότε καλουμένους, ὡς εἰς αἰτίας ἀλόγους καὶ δυνάμεις ἀπροσώπους καὶ κατηναγκασμένα πάθη διατρίβοντας τὸ θεῖον." Plutarch, *Nikias*, cap. 23. The complaint, it will be seen, is the same in modern that it was in ancient times. Compare Plutarch, *Perikles*, cap. 6; Cicero, *Tusc. Disp.* i. 13, *Opera*, ed. Nobbe, tom. viii. p. 299.

evident that the law of gravitation is but an expression of a particular mode of Divine action. And what is thus true of one law is true of all laws. The Anthropomorphist is naturally alarmed by the continual detection of new uniformities, and the discovery of order where before there seemed to be disorder; because his conception of Divine action has been historically derived from the superficial contrast between the seemingly irregular action of will and the more-obviously regular action of less complex phenomena. The Cosmist, on the other hand, in whose mind Divine action is identified with orderly action, and to whom a really irregular phenomenon would seem like the manifestation of some order-hating Ahriman, foresees in every possible extension of knowledge a fresh confirmation of his faith in God, and thus recognizes no antagonism between our duty as inquirers and our duty as worshippers. He will admit no such inherent and incurable viciousness in the constitution of things as is postulated by the anthropomorphic hypothesis. To him no part of the world is godless. He does not rest content with the conception of "an absentee God, sitting idle, ever since the first Sabbath, at the outside of his universe, and 'seeing it go;'" for he has learned, with Carlyle, "that this fair universe, were it in the meanest province thereof, is in very deed the star-domed City of God; that through every star, through every grass-blade, and most through every living soul, the glory of a present God still beams."[1]

From the anthropomorphic point of view it will quite naturally be urged in objection, that this apparently-desirable result is reached through the degradation of Deity from an "intelligent personality" into a "blind force," and is therefore in reality an undesirable and perhaps even quasi-atheistic result. To the theologian the stripping-off the anthropomorphic vestments with which men have sought to render the Infinite representable in imagination, always means the

[1] *Sartor Resartus*, bk. ii. chap. vii.; bk. iii. chap. viii.

leaving of nothing but "blind force" as a residuum. Trained upon the subjective method, and habitually applying to all propositions the test of metaphysical congruity only, he naturally regards the possibilities of human thought as fairly representative of the possibilities of existence. Accordingly since human intelligence is the highest mode of Being which we know—being in the nature of things the highest mode, since it is the mode in which we ourselves exist, and which we must therefore necessarily employ as a norm by which to estimate all other modes—the theologian infers that any higher mode of Being is not only inconceivable but impossible. And so, when a vast extension of our knowledge of nature shows (or seems to show) that the workings of quasi-human intelligence form but an inadequate and misleading symbol of the workings of Divine Power, it naturally seems to the theologian that we are giving up an "intelligent personality" for a "blind force."

Here, however, as before, the difficulty is one which theology has created for itself. It is not science, but theology, which conjures up a host of phantom terrors by the gratuitous use of the question-begging epithet "blind force." The use of this, and of the kindred epithet "brute matter," implies that matter and force are real existences,—independent "data objective to" consciousness. Such a view, however, as already shown, cannot be maintained. To the scientific inquirer, the terms "matter" and "force" are mere symbols which stand *tant bien que mal* for certain generalized modes of Divine manifestation: they are no more real existences than the x and y of the algebraist are real existences. The question as to identifying Deity with Force is, therefore, simply ruled out. The question which really presents itself is quite different. Theologically phrased, the question is whether the creature is to be taken as a measure of the Creator. Scientifically phrased, the question is whether the highest form of Being as yet sug-

gested to one petty race of creatures by its ephemeral experience of what is going on in one tiny corner of the universe, is necessarily to be taken as the equivalent of that absolutely highest form of Being in which all the possibilities of existence are alike comprehended. It is the same question which confronted us in our opening chapter, and which returned to confront us in sundry other chapters of our Prolegomena. Already we have more than once answered it, in a general way, by showing that "the possibilities of thought are not coextensive with the possibilities of things." We have now to give it a more special answer, by inquiring into the possibility of a mode of existence not limited by the conditions which limit conscious existence within the narrow domain of our terrestrial experience. In other words, we have to inquire into the relations between Matter and Spirit; and the inquiry, besides throwing light on questions which must have arisen in the course of our exposition of the evolution of life and intelligence, will also furnish us with the means for emphasizing the theistic conclusions obtained in the present chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

MATTER AND SPIRIT.

It is the usual lot of scientific writers who maintain theories which have not yet become popular with the theological world, to be accused of holding opinions which they not only do not hold, but against which they have perhaps, on every fitting occasion, publicly and emphatically protested. Partly, no doubt, such misrepresentations arise from that carelessness (to call it by no worse name) which too often characterizes the statements of persons who have come to believe that the interests of sacred truth have been committed to them for safe keeping. Whether the truth in question derives its sacredness from time-hallowed tradition or what are called the "higher instincts of our nature," whether its self-appointed guardians are conservative theologians or radical iconoclasts, extreme devotion to its interests is liable to be accompanied by a lofty disregard for that accuracy of statement which to the scientific inquirer seems so indispensable. It appears to be tacitly assumed that the interests of Truth in the abstract can be rightly subserved only by the sacrifice of divers humble concrete truths. Abundant evidence of this is to be found in the tracts and speeches of "teetotalers," "labour reformers," "friends of the People," and other sentimentalists.

As regards theologians, a great deal is to be said in behalf of their intolerance of opinions which they honestly believe to be fraught with spiritual and moral evil. But this zeal in the cause of Truth too often betrays them into misrepresentations which suggest that the maxim *Nulla fides cum hæreticis* has not yet been completely expunged from their moral code. Especially in the use of unpopular question-begging epithets they are by no means sufficiently scrupulous. Such epithets as "materialism" and "atheism," being extremely unpopular, have long been made to do heavy duty in lieu of argument. In this sort of barbaric warfare the term "materialism" is especially convenient, by reason of a treacherous ambiguity in its connotations. Certain abstract theorems of metaphysics are correctly described as constituting materialism; and the persons who assert them are correctly called materialists. On the other hand, those persons are popularly called materialists who allow their actions to be guided by the desires of the moment, without reference to any such rule of right living as is termed a "high ideal of life." Persons who worship nothing but worldly success, who care for nothing but wealth, or fashionable display, or personal celebrity, or sensual gratification, are thus loosely called materialists. The term can therefore easily be made to serve as a poisoned weapon, and there are theologians who do not scruple to employ it as such against the upholders of philosophic opinions which they do not like but are unable to refute. A most flagrant instance was recently afforded by a lecturer on Positivism, who, after insinuating that pretty much the whole body of contemporary scientific philosophers are Positivists, and that Positivists are but very little better than materialists, proceeded to inform his audience that "materialists" are men who led licentious lives.

It would be hard to find words strong enough to characterize the villany of such misrepresentations as this

could we fairly suppose them to be deliberately intended. They would imply extreme moral turpitude, were it not that they are so obviously the product of extreme slovenliness of thinking joined with culpable carelessness of assertion. The chain of ill-conceived arguments upon which they depend is something like this:—Every attempt to interpret the succession of mental phenomena by means of theorems originally devised to interpret the movements of matter, involves the assertion of materialism; the assertion of materialism involves the denial of personal immortality; the denial of personal immortality deprives morality of its principal sanction, and prevents us from having any higher ideal of life than the gratification of egoistic desires; *ergo*, we are justified in insinuating that philosophers who interpret mental manifestations by a reference to material structure are likely to be men of loose morals. Such is the tacit argument which underlies this kind of theological misrepresentation; and if pity for the mental confusion which it implies, we may perhaps condone or overlook the bigotry which assists in disguising its flimsiness. In truth, a more striking example of the audacity of the subjective method could not well be found. Not one of the premises from which so startling a conclusion is drawn has been verified; and it would not be difficult to show that each one involves a *non sequitur*. It might be shown that the denial of personal immortality does not deprive morality of its principal sanction, or prevent us from having any higher ideal of life than the gratification of egoistic desires. And it might be forcibly argued that the denial of personal immortality has by no means been proved to be an inevitable corollary from the assertion of materialism, though it may freely be admitted to be a probable corollary. But with these two unverified inferences we are not now especially concerned. What concerns us is the initial *non sequitur*,—that every attempt to interpret mental manifestations by a reference

to material structure involves the assertion of materialism. This is the *non sequitur* which lies at the very bottom of the theological misrepresentation, and its utter fallaciousness needs to be thoroughly exposed.

It would be grossly unjust to throw all the blame of this particular *non sequitur* upon the theologians, who have enough logical delinquencies of their own to answer for, without being required to carry the burden of their adversaries' errors into the bargain. The illegitimate inference is one which scientific writers, and philosophers of a certain school, have been quite as ready to make as theologians: indeed, I believe it was the former who first suggested it to the latter. At all events, without going into historical minutiæ concerning the origin of materialism, but confining our attention to its more recent scientific phases, we may observe that it was not a theologian, but an eminent man of science, who first suggested that the results of modern objective psychology might be represented in the formula, *Ohne Phosphor kein Gedanke.* This formula has been caught up as a watchword by a school of atheistic writers, some of whom, as Moleschott and Vogt, rank very high as scientific specialists, but none of whom seem to be worthy of mention for psychological capacity or for acquaintance with the best thoughts of modern philosophy. The most conspicuous representative of this school is Dr. Büchner,—a writer who deserves praise for his power of lucid exposition, but whose pages are too often deformed with brutalities of expression for which no atonement is made in the shape of original or valuable thought. Although this writer has no scientific reputation whatever, and although his school has no more claim to rank with the great schools of philosophy in our time than it had when the now-forgotten Lamettrie represented it in the days of Hume and Kant, yet through loudness of asseveration it has succeeded in doing much to mislead and perplex the public mind with reference to the

philosophic results of recent scientific inquiry. Because Dr. Büchner and his followers point to certain discoveries in nervous physiology or in transcendental physics as evidence of the materiality of mind, it has come to be currently supposed that those scientific inquirers who accept the discoveries accept also the materialistic inference. And because the ablest scientific inquirers, being more occupied in hunting for truths than in looking about for ugly consequences, have seldom said anything on either side of the question, their silence has been interpreted as equivalent to assent, both by the materialists and by the theologians. Energetic protests, however, have been made against this erroneous interpretation, by Prof. Tyndall on the part of molecular physics, and by Prof. Huxley on the part of physiology; while Mr. Spencer has most conclusively demonstrated that, from the scientific point of view, the hypothesis of the materialists is not only as untenable to-day as it has ever been, but must always remain inferior in philosophic value to the opposing spiritualistic hypothesis. Let us look at some of the arguments which necessitate this conclusion.

"No thought without phosphorus!" This remark of Moleschott's has been called a "trenchant" remark. To me it seems a very barren piece of truism. I have no doubt that a century hence, the fact that such a remark should have been regarded either as a valuable novelty or as an alarming heresy, will be cited in evidence of the intellectual dulness of our time. If the aphorism is not restricted to the conditions under which thinking occurs within the limits of our experience, it is merely an audacious assertion, not worthy of serious refutation. If it is thus restricted, it becomes a mere platitude. Within the limits of our experience no one supposes that thinking is done without a body. No philosopher of any school whatever, theological or scientific, maintains that, during the period of human life, there is such a thing as consciousness without brain. None

will assert, that, under terrestrial conditions, we have any experience of psychical manifestation apart from physical structure. When, therefore, some speculative physiologist singles out one of the most important chemical ingredients of brain-substance, and tells us that there is no thinking done without that chemical ingredient, we have no good ground either for rejoicing over increased wisdom, or for alarm at possible conclusions. The conclusions to be drawn, whatever they may be, remain just the same as before. Vision is essentially a psychical process; yet no one pretends that vision can be accomplished without an eye. If I were to proclaim on the house-tops, "No vision without retinal rods," would not the common-sense of mankind either rebuke my audacity in pretending that I had got possession of a new and wonderful truth, or derisively inquire my reasons for making so much outcry over such a manifest platitude

The case remains entirely unaltered when we come to such a minute comparison of psychical manifestation and brain-action as was indicated in our chapter on the Evolution of Mind. Whatever theory be held with regard to a future life, he who admits that during the present life mental action in the gross is correlated with brain-action in the gross, can in no wise complain of an attempt to trace out the detailed correlations between mental action in the little and brain-action in the little. If the brain is the organ of Mind, and if the daily manifestations of Mind, in all their complexity, are conditioned by the possession of such a complex organ, then the simple ultimate elements of which the complex mental manifestations are made up, must be severally conditioned by the simple ultimate elements, structural and functional, which make up the complex organ and its molecular activities. In proceeding to trace out these simple ultimate correlations, we are merely analyzing two complicated groups of phenomena into their elements, in order that we may arrive at a better practical understanding

of them; and at the end of our inquiry we no more stand committed to any conclusion regarding the real nature of either group than we did at the beginning. When we admit that a blow on the head is likely to make a man insensible, we are just as much or just as little materialists as when we suggest the hypothesis that cerebral inflammation, by obstructing certain particular transit-lines, may prevent certain particular associations of ideas and thus obliterate certain specific memories. Repeating Mr. Spencer's words, we may say that "the general relation between mental manifestations and material structure traced out [in this work], has implications identical with, and no wider than, those which familiar experiences thrust upon us." In objective psychology, as in other departments of inquiry, science is but an extension of common knowledge. "That drowsiness impedes thinking, that wine excites or stupefies according to amount and circumstances, that great loss of blood produces temporary unconsciousness,—are facts admitted by everyone, be his theory of things what it may. That you cannot get out of the undeveloped child thoughts and feelings like those you get out of the developed man; that the idiot, with brain permanently arrested in its growth, remains permanently incapable of any but the simplest mental actions; are propositions not denied by the most intemperate reviler of physiological psychology. But one who recognizes such facts and propositions is just as much chargeable with materialism as one who puts together facts and propositions like those which constitute the exposition [of psychical phenomena contained in this work]. Whoever grants that from the rudimentary consciousness implied by the vacant stare of the infant, up to the quickly apprehensive, far-seeing, and variously-feeling consciousness of the adult, the transition is through slow steps of mental progress that accompany slow steps of bodily progress, tacitly asserts the same relation of Mind and Matter which is asserted by one who traces out the evolution of the

nervous system and the accompanying evolution of intelligence, from the lowest to the highest forms of life."[1]

It appears, therefore, that, so far as objective psychology is concerned, but little support has as yet been obtained for the materialistic hypothesis. The most that psychology, working with the aid of physiology, has thus far achieved, has been to show that, within the limits of our experience, there is an *invariable concomitance* between psychical phenomena and the phenomena of nervous action; and this, as we have seen, is but the elaborate analytic statement of a plain truth, which is asserted alike by philosophers of every school and by the common-sense of every human being,—namely, that from birth until death there is no manifestation of Mind except in association with Body. But beyond this it is quite clear that objective psychology can never go. The most that psychology, working with the aid of physiology, can ever achieve, will be to show the invariable concomitance between nervous and psychical phenomena, within the limits of our experience. The most it can ever do will be to illustrate, with more and more minute detail, that same proposition in asserting which it has been from the outset upheld by the universal consent of mankind. To enlarge the scope of that proposition, to add to it new ulterior implications, must for ever remain beyond its power. Or if this is still not perfectly clear, the kindred considerations now to be drawn from the study of transcendental physics will make it clear.

It has been not uncommonly taken for granted, both by materialists and by theologians, that molecular physics, in establishing a quantitative correlation between the various modes of motion manifested throughout organic and inorganic nature, has supplied a basis whereon to found some theory of the materiality of Mind. Here, as before, the theologians have accepted the materialistic inference and aimed their assaults at the irrefragable scientific theorem,

[1] *Principles of Psychology*, vol. i. p. 617.

instead of admitting the scientific theorem and showing that, when rightly understood, it does not afford a premise for the materialistic inference. Mr. Spencer pithily remarks that the one class show by their fears, quite as much as the others show by their hopes, that they believe in the theoretical possibility of resolving mental phenomena into motions of matter; whereas those who really comprehend the import of modern discoveries in molecular physics are more thoroughly convinced than ever that any such reduction is utterly beyond the bounds of possibility. A brief consideration will suffice to show us that one of the great results of the discovery of the correlation of forces is the final destruction of the central argument by which materialism has sought to maintain its position. Henceforth the spiritualistic hypothesis may, perhaps, be still regarded as on trial, in so far as it needs much further explanation and limitation; but the materialistic hypothesis is doomed irretrievably.

For let us note well what is implied in the assertion that sun-derived radiance is metamorphosed, first into the static energy of vegetable tissue, and afterwards into the dynamic energy which maintains the multiform activity of the animal organism; and that through the liberation of a part of such dynamic energy, in the form of discharges between interconnected ganglia, there are rendered possible the phenomena of conscious activity.[1] Let us endeavour to mark out precisely what is meant by this assertion. In its present form it is a concrete statement, based upon the abstract truths that, within the limits of our experience, any given species of motion whatever has acquired its distinctive attributes through transformation from some other species, and will again lose these distinctive attributes through a subsequent transformation. For example, the heat which now raises the temperature of a pound of water just one degree of Fahrenheit, has acquired its present form of existence

[1] See above, vol. i. pp. 411, 416.

through the transformation of as much molar motion as is implied in the fall of 772 pounds of matter through one foot of space; and it will lose its present form of existence as fast as it is retransformed into molar motion of expansion, or into other modes of molecular motion, according to superinduced circumstances. So when food is taken into the organism and assimilated with the tissues, the quantity of molecular motion involved in the secretion of bile by the liver, or in the raising of the arm by an act of will, or in the knitting of a new plexus of associated ideas by the opening of new communications between brain-cells, may equally be said to have acquired its present specific forms through transformation from the potential motion latent in the prepared food. So we may say, very roughly, that there is a metamorphosis of molar motion into heat and actinism; of heat and actinism into the potential motion latent in the nutriment ultimately derived from sun-nourished vegetable tissues; of this potential motion into undulations among the molecules of nerve; of these undulations back into molar motions of the muscles which move limbs, or into molecular motions of secreting glands, and so on, in a never-ending circuit. The circuit is thus very roughly described, but such is essentially its character. But now let us note that throughout this wondrous circuit, from molar motion to molecular nerve-motion, and back again to molar motion, there is no question of Mind whatever. The metamorphosis is always from one species of material motion into some other species of material motion, but never from a species of material motion into an idea or a feeling. The dynamic circuit is absolutely complete without taking psychical manifestations into the account at all. Now obviously the most that molecular physics can ever accomplish will be to point out, in more and more minute detail, the characteristics of the various metamorphoses which occur within the limits of this circuit. The ideal goal of physical

inquiry would be to furnish algebraic equations for every curve described by every particle of matter during the entire series of transformations, from the arrested molar motions of the gravitating particles of the sun, down to the endlessly-complex molecular motions which take place within the cerebral tissue of a mathematician engaged in solving partial differential equations. However stupendous such an achievement may seem to us who are as yet in the callow infancy of scientific inquiry, there is nevertheless no radical absurdity involved in conceiving it as theoretically possible. But now let us suppose all this actually achieved. Let us suppose physical inquiry to have reached its uttermost conceivable limit, having reduced the whole problem of motion, in all its myriad manifestations, in both inorganic and organic nature, to a purely algebraic problem, for the solution of which the requisite algebraic devices are at hand; and let us consider what we have thus achieved. Have we made the first step toward the resolution of psychical phenomena into modes of motion? Obviously we have not. The closed circuit of motion, motion, motion, remains just what it was before. No conceivable advance in physical discovery can get us out of this closed circuit, and into this circuit psychical phenomena do not enter. Psychical phenomena stand *outside* this circuit, *parallel* with that brief segment of it which is made up of molecular motions in nerve-tissue. However strict the parallelism may be, within the limits of our experience, between the phenomena of mind and this segment of the circuit of motions, the task of transcending or abolishing the radical antithesis between the phenomena of mind and the phenomena of motions of matter, must always remain an impracticable task. For in order to transcend or abolish this radical antithesis, we must be prepared to show how a given quantity of molecular motion in nerve-tissue can become transformed into a definable amount of ideation or feeling. But this, it is quite safe to say, can

never be done. Free as we were, a moment ago, to admit the boundless possibilities of scientific inquiry in one direction, we may here at once mark the bounds beyond which, in another direction, scientific inquiry cannot advance.

For in the last resort it is subjective psychology which must render the decisive verdict as to the possibility of identifying feeling with motion; and to obtain this decisive verdict there is but one legitimate way. By a physical analysis we must ascertain what is the primordial element in motion, and by a psychological analysis we must ascertain what is the primordial element in feeling; it must then be left for consciousness to decide whether these two primordial elements are or are not in such wise like each other that the one may be substituted for the other indifferently; and from this verdict there can, in the nature of the case, be no appeal. Now it would be very rash to suppose that we have as yet arrived at a knowledge of the primordial unit, either of motion or of feeling: still we have made an approximation sufficient for the purposes of the present argument. Our analysis has progressed so far as to enable us to foresee the verdict, and to rest assured that further analysis will reiterate and not reverse it. In the chapter on the Composition of Mind, we saw that "the physical action which accompanies psychical changes is an undulatory displacement of molecules, resulting in myriads of little waves or pulses of movement." We saw also that, "as a cognizable state of consciousness is attended by the transmission of a number of little waves from one nerve-cell to another, so the ultimate psychical elements of each conscious state must correspond to the passage of these little waves taken one by one." And we were "led to infer, as the ultimate unit of which Mind is composed, a simple *psychical shock*, answering to that simple *physical pulsation* which is the ultimate unit of nervous action."[1] Here, then, are our approximately-primordial

[1] See above, p. 131.

elements,—on the one hand a psychical shock as the basis of all consciousness, on the other hand a physical pulsation as the basis of all that molecular motion of which nervous action is a species. It is now for consciousness to decide, upon direct inspection, whether a psychical shock is so much like a physical pulsation that in a given series of propositions the one term might be substituted for the other. "Can we, then, think of the subjective and objective activities as the same? Can the oscillation of a molecule be represented in consciousness side by side with a [psychical] shock, and the two be recognized as one? No effort enables us to assimilate them. That a unit of feeling has nothing in common with a unit of motion, becomes more than ever manifest when we bring the two into juxtaposition. And the immediate verdict of consciousness thus given, might be analytically justified were this a fit place for the needful analysis. *For it might be shown that the conception of an oscillating molecule is built out of many units of feeling; and that to identify it with a [psychical] shock would be to identify a whole congeries of units with a single unit.*"[1]

Thus we were fully justified in stating that through no imaginable future advance in molecular physics can the materialists ever be enabled to realize their desideratum of translating mental phenomena in terms of matter and motion. We were right in hinting that one grand result of the

[1] Spencer, *Principles of Psychology*, vol. i. p. 158. I have taken the liberty to alter Mr. Spencer's metaphorical phrase "nervous shock" into the more literally accurate phrase "psychical shock." The term "nervous shock," though partially justified by the colloquial use of the word "nervous" in description of psychical states (as when we speak of feeling nervous or flighty), is nevertheless a bad term in an argument like the present, where the strictest accuracy is above all things desirable. For besides this psychological use of it, the term "nervous shock" is used in physiology in a sense strictly synonymous with one kind of "physical pulsation." So that, to those who pay more attention to an author's slips of expression than to his manifest meaning, the term may seem to contain the materialistic implications which it is the express purpose of Mr. Spencer's argument to avoid. Any such misapprehension is impossible if we substitute the term "psychical shock."—(Mr. Spencer authorizes me to add that he thoroughly approves of this emendation.)

enormous progress achieved during the past forty years in the analysis of both physical and psychical phenomena, has been the final and irretrievable overthrow of the materialistic hypothesis. Henceforth we may regard materialism as ruled out, and relegated to that limbo of crudities to which we some time since consigned the hypothesis of special creations. The latest results of scientific inquiry, whether in the region of objective psychology or in that of molecular physics, leave the gulf between Mind and Matter quite as wide as it was judged to be in the time of Descartes. It still remains as true as then, that between that of which the differential attribute is Thought and that of which the differential attribute is Extension, there can be nothing like identity or similarity. Although we have come to see that between the manifestations of the two there is such an unfailing parallelism that the one group of phenomena can be correctly described by formulas originally invented for describing the other group, yet all that has been established is this parallelism. When it comes to the task of making the parallels meet, we are no better off than Malebranche with his Occasional Causes, or Leibnitz with his Pre-established Harmony: nay, we are no better off than the ancient Gnostics, with their "æons" and their "Demiurge." Rich as are the harvests which science has obtained from these two fields, the fence which divides them has never been broken down; and until the insuperable distinction between Subject and Object, between the Conscious and the Unconscious, can be transcended, it can never be broken down.

But while the materialistic hypothesis is thus irretrievably doomed, it is otherwise with the opposing spiritualistic hypothesis. It is true that we cannot directly translate Matter in terms of Spirit, any more than we can translate Spirit in terms of Matter. But we have seen that the term "matter" does not stand for any real existence, but only for one of the modes in which an Inscrutable Existence reveals itself to us,

within the limits of our terrestrial experience. It must always be borne in mind that we go with Berkeley to the full extent of asserting that the term "matter" means, not the occult reality, but the group of phenomena which are known as resistance, extension, colour, etc.[1] If now we proceed to the outermost verge of admissible speculation, and inquire for a moment what may perhaps be the nature of that Inscrutable Existence of which the universe of phenomena is the multiform manifestation, we shall find that its intimate essence may conceivably be identifiable with the intimate essence of what we know as Mind. In order to show how this can be, I shall cite from Mr. Spencer a somewhat lengthy passage, to which the attention of critics has hitherto been too little directed.

"Mind, as known to the possessor of it, is a circumscribed aggregate of activities; and the cohesion of these activities, one with another, throughout the aggregate, compels the postulation of a something of which they are the activities. But the same experiences which make him aware of this coherent aggregate of mental activities, simultaneously make him aware of activities that are not included in it—outlying activities which become known by their effects on this aggregate, but which are experimentally proved to be not coherent with it, and to be coherent with one another.[2] As, by the definition of them, these external activities cannot be brought within the aggregate of activities distinguished as those of Mind, they must for ever remain to him nothing more than the unknown correlatives of their effects on this aggregate; and can be thought of only in terms furnished by this aggregate. Hence, if he regards his conceptions of these activities lying beyond Mind, as constituting knowledge of them, he is deluding himself: he is but representing these activities in terms of Mind, and can never do other-

[1] See above, vol. i. p. 88.
[2] See, in this connection, *First Principles*, pp. 143—156.

wise. Eventually he is obliged to admit that his ideas of Matter and Motion, merely symbolic of unknowable realities, are complex states of consciousness built out of units of feeling. But if, after admitting this, he persists in asking whether units of feeling are of the same nature as the units of force distinguished as external, or whether the units of force distinguished as external are of the same nature as units of feeling; then the reply, still substantially the same, is that we may go farther towards conceiving units of external force to be identical with units of feeling, than we can towards conceiving units of feeling to be identical with units of external force. Clearly, if units of external force are regarded as absolutely unknown and unknowable, then to translate units of feeling into them is to translate the known into the unknown, which is absurd. And if they are what they are supposed to be by those who identify them with their symbols, then the difficulty of translating units of feeling into them is insurmountable: if Force as it objectively exists is absolutely alien in nature from that which exists subjectively as Feeling, then the transformation of Force into Feeling is unthinkable. Either way, therefore, it is impossible to interpret inner existence in terms of outer existence. But if, on the other hand, units of Force as they exist objectively, are essentially the same in nature with those manifested subjectively as units of Feeling; then a conceivable hypothesis remains open. Every element of that aggregate of activities constituting a consciousness, is known as belonging to consciousness only by its cohesion with the rest. Beyond the limits of this coherent aggregate of activities, exist activities quite independent of it, and which cannot be brought into it. We may imagine, then, that by their exclusion from the circumscribed activities constituting consciousness, these outer activities, though of the same intrinsic nature, become antithetically opposed in aspect. Being disconnected from consciousness, or cut off

by its limits, they are thereby rendered foreign to it. Not being incorporated with its activities, or linked with these as they are with one another, consciousness cannot, as it were, run through them; and so they come to be figured as unconscious—are symbolized as having the nature called material as opposed to that called spiritual. While, however, it thus seems an imaginable possibility that units of external Force may be identical in nature with units of the force known as Feeling, yet we cannot by so representing them get any nearer to a comprehension of external Force. For . . . supposing all forms of Mind to be composed of homogeneous units of feeling variously aggregated, the resolution of them into such units leaves us as unable as before to think of the substance of Mind as it exists in such units; and thus, even could we really figure to ourselves all units of external Force as being essentially like units of the force known as Feeling, and as so constituting a universal sentiency, we should be as far as ever from forming a conception of that which is universally sentient."[1]

I do not know where we could find anything more admirable than this lucid statement, in which the most subtle conclusion now within the kèn of the scientific speculator is reached without disregard of the canons prescribed by the doctrine of relativity. From this masterly statement it appears that while the Inscrutable Power manifested in the world of phenomena cannot possibly be regarded as quasi-material in its nature, it may nevertheless be possibly regarded as quasi-psychical. Were we compelled to choose between these two alternatives, the latter would be the one which we must perforce adopt. For besides the general reason here indicated for such preference, there would in such case be presented the more special reason, that upon no imaginable hypothesis of evolution (if the foregoing analysis be correct) can units of Mind be regarded as pro-

[1] Spencer, *Principles of Psychology*, vol. i. pp. 159–161.

duced by the collocations of units of Matter. Were we constrained to such a treatment of the subject, we should be forced to admit that the actual existence of psychical energy, as a phenomenon essentially distinct from physical energy, implies, as its antecedent source, something quasi-psychical in the constitution of things.

A third alternative, however, remains open. Since we know nothing even of Mind, save as qualitatively differentiated from Matter, under the persistent conditions by which conscious activity is limited, it is open to us to maintain that the Unknown Reality which is manifested under both aspects cannot legitimately be formulated in terms of either aspect. The unconditioned Source of the phenomena which we distinguish as psychical, and of the phenomena which we distinguish as material, may well be neither quasi-psychical nor quasi-material. Whichever set of terms we use, we are using symbols the values of which are determined by our experiences of conditioned existence, and which must therefore be totally inadequate to express the characteristics of unconditioned existence. Nevertheless, in so far as the exigencies of finite thinking require us to symbolize the Infinite Power manifested in the world of phenomena, we are clearly bound to symbolize it as quasi-psychical, rather than as quasi-material. Provided we bear in mind the symbolic character of our words, we may say that "God is Spirit," though we may not say, in the materialistic sense, that "God is Force." Such an utterance is, indeed, anthropomorphic. But we are now finding powerful confirmation of the argument elaborated in our Prolegomena, that a Positive mode of philosophizing is impracticable, and that we can never get entirely rid of all traces of anthropomorphism.[1] As formerly shown, "there is anthropomorphism even in speaking of the unknown Cause as a *Power* manifested in phenomena;" and if this expression is liable to

[1] See above, vol. i. p. 183.

be honestly misinterpreted as implying the identification of Deity with so-called "blind force," and as thus conveying a *lower* conception than that upon which theology insists, then we need not shrink from the scarcely-greater anthropomorphism involved in speaking of the unknown Cause as a *Spirit* manifested in phenomena. Such a choice of symbols will at least serve to show that we no more identify Deity with "blind force" than we identify Mind with "brute matter," or a psychical shock with a physical pulsation, and that, in our innermost intent, we are striving to convey a *higher* conception than that upon which theology insists.

But in thus consenting to adopt a term about which quasi-psychical connotations have clustered, we do not implicitly consent to the clothing of Deity with definable psychical attributes. The moment we use the words "intelligence" and "volition," we are using words which have distinct meanings, as descriptive of certain circumscribed modes of psychical activity in man and some other animals. Except as descriptive of these circumscribed modes of psychical activity, they have no meanings whatever: and to seek to apply them to the unlimited activity (whether quasi-psychical or not) of a Being that is not circumscribed by an "objective datum" of any sort, is simply to call into existence a number of illegitimate propositions which, if dealt with as legitimate, would entangle us once more in the net-work of absurdities from which we were set free by the chapter on Anthropomorphic Theism.

Thus we are gradually finding ourselves obliged to regard the suggestion with which we ended the chapter just mentioned as something more than a mere random suggestion. Whether it be true or not that, within the bounds of the phenomenal universe the highest type of existence is that which we know as Humanity, the conclusion is in every way forced upon us that, quite independently of limiting conditions in space or time, there is a form of Being which can

neither be assimilated to Humanity nor to any lower type of existence. We have no alternative, therefore, but to regard it as higher than Humanity, even "as the heavens are higher than the earth;" and, except for the intellectual arrogance which the arguments of theologians show lurking beneath their expressions of humility, there is no reason why this admission should not be made unreservedly, without the anthropomorphic qualifications by which its effect is commonly nullified. The time is surely coming when the slowness of men in accepting such a conclusion will be marvelled at, and when the very inadequacy of human language to express Divinity will be regarded as a reason for deeper faith and more solemn adoration.

CHAPTER V.

RELIGION AS ADJUSTMENT.

FROM this abstract exposition of Cosmic Theism as a religious doctrine, let us now proceed to consider some of the practical relations of Cosmic Theism to human life, with especial reference to conduct, which, as Matthew Arnold well says, makes up in importance at least seven-eighths of life. As every system of religion has comprised, on the one hand, a theory of the world, and on the other hand, a code enjoining certain kinds of human conduct, and as we have thus far expounded Cosmism as a theory of the world, what is now to be said of the relations of Cosmism to human conduct? Or, in other words, does the enlargement of our conceptions of Divine action, in conformity with the requirements of contemporary knowledge, involve any radical alteration of the fundamental principles of action in which Religion, viewed practically, consists?

The position is often taken, by those who dissent from current ecclesiastical creeds, that there is no reason in the nature of things why the long-established association between religion and ethics should be continued,—and to these the following inquiry will perhaps seem uncalled for. It is urged, with justice, that conduct is not necessarily dependent on creed that equal uprightness may coexist with belief in

doctrines diametrically opposite, that, in point of fact, the atheist usually leads quite as pure and holy a life as the Christian; and moreover, that it is possible to construct, out of scientific materials solely, an ethical code even more complete than any of those now generally accepted and practised. It would be useless to deny the force of these arguments. Not only is it true that science can furnish the inquirer with adequate principles of right action, but it is also true that, even without any very elaborate or thoroughly understood ethical code, the heterodox inquirer is, on the average, quite as likely to live rightly as the orthodox believer, since our characters depend far more upon our feelings which are inherited than upon the doctrines which are taught us. But, while admitting all this, it must still be claimed that the time-honoured association of religion with morality is not arbitrary, but founded in the nature of things, and that it will accordingly continue in the future. The arguments just stated present but one side of the case. For while it is quite true that character is not a product of belief, it is no less true that action is influenced by belief. While observation shows that theological scepticism does not exert a deteriorating influence upon character, it cannot be doubted that ethical scepticism, could it become dominant, would confuse and obscure the incentives which prompt us to actions in harmony with the environment, and deter us from mal-adjustments. Practically the momentum of inherited impulse and bequeathed ethical tradition is so powerful that the cases in which theological scepticism has entailed permanently-effective ethical scepticism have been the exception rather than the rule. But what now concerns us is the inquiry whether in the nature of things a substitution of scientific for theological symbols involves an alteration of ethical values in the grand equation between duty and action. We shall find that no such change is involved in the substitution. Though we may, and do, throw overboard the

whole of the semi-barbaric mythology in which Christianity has hitherto been symbolized, we shall find, nevertheless, that we have kept firmly in our possession the ethical kernel for which Christianity is chiefly valued even by those who retain the whole of this mythology.

If we inquire into the position which every theological creed has occupied with reference to the ethical code by which it has been supplemented, we shall find that in every case it has served to supply a powerful *sanction* to the principles of right action contained in the ethical code. That "thy days may be long in the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee," or that "thy Father which seeth in secret may reward thee openly," *therefore* must thou do these things written in the law. Along with the moral code, embodying the principles of right action recognized by the community, there has ever been declared some theory of the relations of man to the unknowable Power manifested in the Cosmos, which has furnished incentives to the actions regarded as right and deterrents from the actions regarded as wrong. It is because religion has ever furnished this weighty sanction to morality that creeds and conduct have always been associated in men's minds; and it is because of this that narrow-minded theologians, unable or unwilling to admit that there can be any other adequate sanctions than those supplied by their own creed, so persistently argue upon the assumption that those who do not accept their creed must of necessity be morally perverse. We need not for the moment inquire into the moral value of the sanctions established by the various historic religions: whether they appeal to the purest and highest of human feelings or not, the essential point which now concerns us is the existence of such sanctions as an indispensable part of every religious system.

What, now, are the ethical sanctions recognized by science, and by that religious doctrine which I have here proposed to designate as Cosmic Theism? In what sense does a

scientific philosophy hold to the distinction between sin on the one hand, and crime or tort on the other? Our questions may readily be answered if, bearing in mind the theoretic attitude of Cosmism toward Anthropomorphism, we note the anthropomorphic theory of sin and the anthropomorphic sanctions for righteousness. On the anthropomorphic hypothesis, sin is an offence against a personal Deity, consisting in the disobedient transgression of some one of his revealed edicts, and calling for punishment either in the present or in a future life, unless reparation be made by repentance or sacrifice. Now the theory of the Cosmist is in substance quite identical with this,[1] though expressed by means of very different verbal symbols. From the scientific point of view, sin is a wilful violation of a law of nature, or—to speak in terms of the theory of evolution—it is a course of thought or action, wilfully pursued, which tends to throw the individual out of balance with his environment, and thus to detract from his physical or moral completeness of life. The seeking after righteousness is characteristic of the modern follower of science quite as much as it was characteristic of the mediæval saint; save that while the latter symbolized his yearning as a desire to become like his highest concrete conception of human excellence ideally embodied in Christ, the former no longer employs any such anthropomorphic symbol, but formulates his feeling in scientific phrase as the persistent desire to live rightly, or in entire conformity to the requirements of nature,—as Goethe expresses it,—

"Im Ganzen, Guten, Wahren, resolut zu leben."

The feeling is identical in the two cases, though the

[1] Saving only the last clause. For, as we shall presently see, science knows of no such thing as reparation for sin. Repentance cannot ward off punishment. And herein the Cosmic hypothesis is as far superior to the Anthropomorphic hypothesis from the ethical, as it is from the philosophical, point of view.

difference in the technical expression of it is as great as the difference between the theology of the "Imitation" and the science of "First Principles." Now when a law of nature has been violated (to use the current phrase), the religion of the scientific inquirer tells him that a sin has been committed; and he is smitten with a sense of self-reproach no whit less keen than that experienced by his mediæval predecessor. The distinction between the scientific and the religious view of the breach of law is thus apparent. When an act has been committed which must entail more or less misery either upon the individual himself or upon others, science merely recognizes that there has been a breach of law; but religion further declares that sin has been done, and there ensues a painful state of consciousness which, as we must carefully note, is not due to selfish dread of suffering to be encountered (since similar suffering in a righteous cause would be met with a feeling of self-approval), but is made up chiefly of self-condemnation for the inexcusable infraction of nature's ordinance. Regarded as a product of psychical evolution, this sense of sin, peculiar to the most highly developed organisms, is the analogue of the sense of pain shared in some degree by all organisms endowed with consciousness. The sense of sin, like the sense of pain, is normally the deterrent from actions which tend to diminish the completeness of the correspondence in which life consists. But while the sense of pain is common to those creatures whose incentives to action are purely selfish, the sense of sin can be possessed only by those creatures whose intelligence is sufficiently complex to enable them to recognize the relationship in which they stand to the omnipresent Power, and whose highest incentives to action are therefore quite impersonal. To feel the sting of self-reproach because of wrong-doing, without any selfish reference to the misery which the wrong-doing must inevitably entail, is the high prerogative of that creature whose future career of evolution,

as we have seen, must mainly consist in spiritual improvement,—and in it we may recognize the sure token of the glorious fulness of life to which Humanity must eventually attain.

Such is the crude outline of the theory of sin, and of the ethical sanctions furnished by religion, into which Cosmism metamorphoses the anthropomorphic theory. Far from rejecting as a mythologic fiction the doctrine that sin is a violation of God's decrees, entailing inevitable punishment, science recognizes therein the anthropomorphic version of the truth that every failure in the system of adjustments in which life consists is followed inevitably by pain, in some one of its lower or higher forms. And thus, by bringing the whole subject into the philosophic domain wherein the Law of Evolution holds sway, we begin to understand, so far as it is possible to understand, the philosophy of evil, pain, and wrong, which to the anthropomorphic theist, as we have seen, must ever remain a distressing and insoluble enigma. Let us briefly trace the process by which men have slowly arrived at the perception of the beneficence of pain, that we may the more clearly see how the process has been determined by the deanthropomorphization of the agencies by which pain is wrought.

In treating of the philosophy of fetishism (Part I. chap. vii.) it was shown that by primeval men, unused to scientific generalization, the forces of nature must have been likened to human volition, because there was nothing else with which to compare them. Man felt within himself a source of power, and did not yet surmise that power could have any other source; and consequently he identified, without any qualification, the forces displayed outside of himself with the force of will as directly revealed in his consciousness. In this necessity of thought originated not only the personifications of ancient mythology, but also the primitive religious worship; a religion of sacrifice, of sorcery, and of terror, as different

from modern religion as mythology is different from modern philosophy. Of primitive religion the most prominent, as well as the most abiding, phase is devil-worship. Mr. Hunter's remarks concerning the Santals will apply equally well to barbarians all over the world, as also to the primeval men from whose crude notions modern orthodoxy has inherited its terrorism. "Of a supreme and beneficent God the Santal has no conception . . . He cannot understand how a Being can be more powerful than himself without wishing to harm him. Discourses upon the attributes of the Deity excite no emotion among the more isolated sections of the race, except a disposition to run away and hide themselves in the jungle; and the only reply made to a missionary at the end of an eloquent description of the omnipotence of God, was, 'And what if that Strong One should eat me?' But although the Santal has no God from whose benignity he may expect favour, there exist a multitude of demons and evil spirits, whose spite he endeavours by supplications to avert. So far from being without a religion, his rites are infinitely more numerous than those of the Hindu."[1] The genesis of this primitive devil-worship finds its explanation in the fact that the uncontrollable agencies of nature—the storm and the earthquake, the wind and the wave—though supposed to resemble man in so far as they were intelligent and volitional agents, could not be wholly like him. Their ways were not as his ways. They were not to be counted upon. They could not be prepared for, defended against, or reasoned with. They might bring harm; and frequently they did bring harm. Accordingly they were regarded with fear and trembling. It is not easy for us to realize the extent to which in early times the unknown was identified with the hurtful.[2] It is not possible for us

[1] *Annals of Rural Bengal*, p. 181.

[2] As Humboldt says, in allusion to the long-enduring effects of this primitive inference:—"Es liegt tief in der trüben Natur des Menschen, in einer

adequately to represent in imagination the overpowering emotions of mingled doubt and dread which must have seized the primitive thinker when brought face to face with this omnipresent, but to him utterly incoherent, universe. Where certainty is for us, for him was uncertainty. The same resistless forces which to us bring expected benefits were for him productive mainly of unlooked-for calamities. We, holding in our grasp the Aladdin's lamp of physical knowledge, may find them obedient slaves: to him, who had not unearthed the talisman, they proclaimed themselves inexorable masters. Hunger and disease, exposure to heat and cold, to the attacks of savage beasts and of unseen enemies, were stern realities of daily experience. There were neither houses for shelter and defence, nor cities for the common protection, nor arts to insure exemption from physical discomfort. Language had not yet found need for words to denote some of the most necessary implements and some of the most ordinary processes of life. Nature was unmanageable as well as unknown,—a stumbling-block as well as a riddle.

Thus the unclassed phenomenon came to be a source of terror; for experience had taught that it was quite as likely to bring disaster as good fortune. Thus the volitional agencies by which fetishism sought to account for surrounding phenomena came to be regarded as capricious and malevolent agencies, whose wrath must be averted by prayer or sorcery, and whose favour must be bought by sacrifice. Thus arose the conception of God as a consuming fire. Thus it was that in Egypt deprecating prayers were addressed to the crocodile, and in Syria to the serpent; that Hindu mothers threw their children into the Ganges, while Carthaginians burned their new-born infants in front of the brazen image of Moloch.

ernsterfüllten Ansicht der Dinge, dass das Unerwartete, Ausserordentliche, nur Furcht, nicht Freude oder Hoffnung erregt." *Kosmos.* tom. i. p. 119.

This sense of a Satanic presence in nature, whether embodied in the form of a malevolent devil or in that of a ferocious deity, ever ready to burst forth with fire and consume his creatures, has been of long continuance. It lies at the bottom of mediæval witchcraft, and it shows itself in the modern "revival-meetings" in which the religious theories of uneducated people still betray their close kinship with those of the savage. From the educated portion of the community, however, it has entirely disappeared; and its disappearance is manifestly due to that part of their education which has consisted in the scientific generalization of natural agencies, and in the consequent deanthropomorphization of their conceptions of force. We have seen that, with the progress of generalization, the conception of volition is gradually excluded from all those groups of phenomena in the production of which the human will is not implicated, and is replaced by the conception of a uniform force, whose actions may be foreseen or modified, and whose effects, if harmful, may be avoided. Our ability to predict the simpler phenomena of nature has deprived them of the terrors due primitively to our anthropomorphic explanations of them. Armies retreating from destruction—like that of Nikias—have never been checked in their course by eclipses which had been foreseen; and comets have been beheld with equanimity since they have been known to move in conic sections. But coincident with the progress of our ability to predict these simpler phenomena, has been the progress of our ability to modify those which are more complicated. The advancement of science is also the advancement of art. Penetrating inquisitively into the secrets of Nature, we employ our information in extorting from her her treasures. Fire is not the only bad master that we have contrived to make a very good servant. We transform heat into motion, and improve our means for travelling. We change electricity into motion, and facilitate the transfer of intelligence. The

agencies which produce small-pox we compel to defeat themselves. And thus, in many ways, we extract profit and gratification from that which is ugly and noxious; as the refuse of gas-works and the drainings of stables, when dealt with by the chemist, yield rich dyes and delicate perfumes.

Thus, as science advances, Nature is better understood. As art progresses, she inflicts less pain and bestows more pleasure. Once hated as an enemy, she is at last revered as a benefactor. Gradually it comes to be perceived that all pain arises from disregard of her wisely-framed ordinances; and that, by conformity to those ordinances, pain may ultimately be avoided. Where the ancient man saw nothing but capricious volition, the modern man beholds force acting by invariable methods. The former knew not that the pain under which he was writhing resulted from a violation of Nature's edicts, and he sought to prevent its recurrence by sacrifice and supplication. The latter knows that Nature's commandments are not to be broken. He knows that to their infringement there is attached an inevitable penalty,—that misery will follow disobedience, the first time, the second time, every time; and he therefore learns to obey. Matter does not put off its resistance to save from broken bones; the stomach does not stop digesting, that poison may be innocuous; the law which couples imprudent exposure with bronchitis and pneumonia will not cease to operate, though thousands die; nerve-tissue will not renounce its properties, to prevent indulgence in evil thoughts and yielding to sinful inclinations from depraving the imagination and weakening the will. To be delivered from evil, we must avoid the mal-adjustments of which evil is the consequence and the symptom. Hence, while to the aboriginal man malevolence was the only conceivable source of suffering, the reverent follower of science perceives the truth of the paradox that the infliction of pain is subservient to a beneficent end. "Pervading all nature, he sees at work a stern

discipline, which is a little cruel, that it may be very kind." That perpetual warfare going on throughout the animal world, whereby those no longer fit to live are spared the miseries of protracted existence, is found to be also the indispensable condition of the origination of higher forms of life. The disappearance of savage tribes before the spread of civilized races, while often accompanied by unjustifiable aggression on the part of the stronger, is perceived to involve the increase of the sum-total of happiness. Thus, with Michelet, we come to regard pain as in some sort the artist of the world, which fashions us with the fine edge of a pitiless chisel, cutting away the ill-adjusted and leaving the nobler type to inherit the earth.[1]

But note that such a solution of the mystery of pain is attainable only by the complete elimination of anthropomorphism from the problem. Introduce a quasi-human will behind the series of phenomena, and we are at once confronted anew with all the difficulties mentioned in the chapter on Anthropomorphic Theism. The fact stands inexorably before us, that a Supreme Will, enlightened by perfect intelligence and possessed of infinite power, might differently have fashioned the universe, though in ways inconceivable by us, so that the suffering and the waste of

[1] "La douleur est en quelque sorte l'artiste du monde, qui nous fait, nous façonne, nous sculpte à la fine pointe d'un impitoyable ciseau. Elle retranche la vie débordante. Et ce qui reste, plus exquis et plus fort, enrichi de sa perte même, en tire le don d'une vie supérieure." Michelet, *L'Oiseau*, p. 106. Compare the sublime passage concerning man, wherein Tennyson says:—

> "If so he type this work of Time
>
> "Within himself from more to more;
> *And, crowned with attributes of woe*
> *Like glories*, move his course, and show
> That life is not as idle ore;
>
> "But iron dug from central gloom,
> And heated hot with burning fears,
> And dipped in baths of hissing tears,
> And battered with the shocks of doom,
>
> "*To shape and use.*"

life which characterize nature's process of evolution might have been avoided. It may be said that such a supposition is sheer nonsense,—since we must accept, as a pre-requisite for all speculation on the subject, the properties of matter and motion as we find them, necessitating as they do the process of evolution as we observe it. But to say this is to concede all that is here maintained, and implicitly to admit that, instead of postulating a quasi-human Will as the source of phenomena, we must rest content with the recognition of an Inscrutable Power, of which the properties of matter and motion, necessitating the process of evolution, with pain and wrong as its concomitants, are the phenomenal manifestations.

With the entire elimination of anthropomorphism, the conception of malevolence as the source of suffering completely vanishes, and the mind assumes an attitude of reverent resignation with reference to the workings of Divine power. Even such a catastrophe as the Lisbon earthquake, which so sorely puzzled the aged Voltaire and the youthful Goethe, lost its worst horrors when geology, discarding mythological explanations, referred it to the action of those same subterranean energies which are ever maintaining the earth in a habitable condition. The scientific inquirer must needs recognize the fact that physical forces will work their normal effects, though the result be the sending of rain alike upon the just and upon the unjust. The expansive energy of steam will slay not only the wicked engineer who has neglected his boiler, but also the innocent children peacefully playing on the deck overhead.

> "Streams will not curb their pride,
> The just man not to entomb,
> Nor lightnings go aside
> To leave his virtues room."

But the flood and the earthquake, like the wickedness of men, in so far as the arrangements of society are not yet

adequate for curbing it, must be accepted with resignation as part and parcel of the events which the constitution of our universe necessitates. Such evils, which right living will not guard against, furnish no excuse for ceasing to shun the committal of wilful wrongs which detract, to a far greater extent, from the fulness of life of ourselves and our fellow-creatures. The sanction by which the religion of the scientific inquirer enforces its ethical code, is the certainty that mal-adjustment will be followed, always by the suffering or degradation of the wrong-doer himself, and usually by the suffering of others who are innocent. And while in this respect there is no essential difference between the Cosmic and the Anthropomorphic theories, on their ethical sides, there is another respect in which the sanction recognized by the former is far more powerful, and must in time become far more effective, than the sanction recognized by the latter. For the current anthropomorphism, in this as in other points betraying its kinship to primeval fetishism, asserts that by repentance and prayer the evil effects of sin may be avoided. The anthropomorphic theist sees in his Deity a being so nearly like himself as to be willing to interfere with the ordinary course of things and dissociate the act of wrong-doing from its legitimate penalty. As the father puts forth his arm and saves his falling child from the natural consequences of a false step, so it is supposed that God will, in certain cases, turn aside the blow which nature has in store for human misdeeds. Science knows of no such interference with the law that pain is consequent upon mal-adjustment. The deed once done will work its full effects, save in so far as checked by counter-actions. He who has swallowed arsenic will be saved, not by prayer, but by an emetic. He who has yielded to temptation may indeed, by the repentant feeling of which prayer is the expression, secure himself from future yielding; but the tendency toward loss of self-control, initiated by the first surrender,

cannot be rendered non-existent by any *ex post facto* act of contrition, though its operation may be counteracted. And if the misdeed, as usually happens, has involved others than the agent, its evil consequences must endure and ramify, until they at last disappear through some natural process of equilibration. No amount of repentance for lying can deprive lies of their tendency to weaken the mutual confidence of men and thus to dissolve society. The lie once told must work its effects, as surely as the stone dropped into water must give forth its arrested motion in rippling circles. No penance or priestly absolution can do away with the persistence of force.

Obedience to the so-called "laws of nature," which are the decrees of God, is therefore the fundamental principle of religion viewed practically. And, as was hinted at the close of the twenty-second chapter of Part II., religion, as thus interpreted, has a wider meaning than morality. For, as we saw, in the chapter referred to, that a philosophy of hedonism has for its subject-matter the principles of action conducive to the right living of the individual so far as his own happiness is concerned, and that a philosophy of morality has for its subject-matter the principles of action conducive to the right living of the individual so far as the well-being of the community is concerned; so a philosophy of religion has for its subject-matter the relations of the individual to the Inscrutable Power manifested in the universe, and the principles of action conducive to his right living considered as a part and parcel of the universe. To live in conformity to Nature's decrees, is to live morally, in the common acceptation of that term, and something more beside. For there are many actions which, as immediately concerning none but the individual, are technically neither moral nor immoral, but which nevertheless are right or wrong. Over-eating, for example, which can hardly be termed immoral, and which the current hedonism mildly

characterizes as imprudent, may from a religious point of view be regarded as wrong or sinful. I cite this homely illustration because it leads directly to the pith and centre of the truth which I am seeking to explain. Hedonism, of which the highest principle of action is personal selfishness, regards the individual as having a right to do what he likes with his own body. Religion declares that he has no such right, but on the other hand has duties toward himself which he is as much bound to discharge as if they directly concerned other people. Religion, therefore, extends the rules of right and wrong primarily derived from the relations of the individual to the community, until they cover even the self-regarding actions of the individual. And what is this but establishing rules of action concerning the individual in his relations to what we call Nature or the Universe? Finally, as the organized moral sense takes cognizance of actions injurious to the community, visiting them with the stings of self-reproach without any direct or conscious tracing out of their probable injurious consequences; so the religious sense takes cognizance of all actions whatsoever which come within the class of mal-adjustments, whether they directly concern the community or not, and the feeling of self-condemnation arises irrespective of any direct estimate of probable consequences. For the religious sense is primarily based upon the aspiration—the noblest which any creature can entertain—after complete fulness of life; and any thought or act, any sin of omission or of commission, inconsistent with such aspiration, awakens the painful consciousness of shortcoming, without any reference to those lower considerations of pleasure and pain of which alone hedonism takes cognizance.

Such, in brief outline, is the theory of religion which seems to me most thoroughly consonant with our present knowledge. Scanty justice can be done, in one short chapter, to so great

a subject. But a detailed exposition would not be in keeping with the purpose of the present work. It is not my aim to propound a complete theory of religion, or to prepare the way for the inauguration of any new religious system—for I should regard any undertaking of this kind as *ab initio* self-convicted of absurdity—but simply to show that it is in the power of Science, without proving recreant to its own methods, to maintain every one of the fundamental truths which give to Religion its permanent value. Starting from the knowledge of nature which we now possess, and without making appeal to venerated traditions based upon the scantier knowledge possessed by relatively barbarous ages, I have sought to show that the truths already discerned and asserted in these traditions—the fundamental truths to which alone the traditions owe their permanent hold upon men's minds—are in nowise shaken, but rather confirmed and reiterated by our present knowledge. For my purpose, this has been sufficiently shown in the present chapter and its two predecessors. For not only have we seen that scientific inquiry, proceeding from its own resources and borrowing no hints from theology, leads to the conclusion that the universe is the manifestation of a Divine Power that is in no wise identifiable with the universe, or interpretable in terms of "blind force" or of any other phenomenal manifestation; but we have also seen that the ethical relations in which man stands with reference to this Divine Power are substantially the same, whether described in terms of modern science or in terms of ancient mythology. And in so far as there is any difference between the scientific and the mythologic view of the sanctions by which these ethical relations are maintained, we have seen that the sanctions recognized by the former are even more powerful than those recognized by the latter. While, lastly, as regards the basis of these ethical relations, the superiority of the scientific view is most conspicuously manifest. Far from its being true, as Mr. Mivart seems to fear, that the

Doctrine of Evolution leaves morality without a theoretical basis, it supplies for it a theoretical basis incomparably deeper and stronger than has ever been supplied for it by any anthropomorphic theory of things. For not only does the Doctrine show that the principles of action which the religious instincts of men have agreed in pronouncing sacred, are involved in the very nature of life itself, regarded as a continuous adjustment; but it shows that the obligation to conform to these principles, instead of deriving its authority from the arbitrary command of a mythologic quasi-human Ruler, derives it from the innermost necessities of that process of evolution which is the perpetual revelation of Divine Power. He to whom the theory of evolution, in all its details, has become as familiar as the saws and maxims of the old mythology are to him who still accepts it, will recognize that to be untrue to the highest attainable ethical code is to be untrue to philosophy, untrue to science, untrue to himself. Thus in the grand equation between duty and action, the substitution of scientific for theological symbols involves no alteration of ethical values. And thus in casting aside the mythologic formulas in which religious obligation was formerly symbolized, we do but recognize the obligation as more binding than ever.

In criticism of the religious theory thus briefly expounded, it will doubtless be urged that such religion is too abstract, too coldly scientific, to have any general influence upon action, and can therefore be of no practical value. The conception of sin as a phase of mal-adjustment will be pronounced incapable of awakening the needful feelings unless there be joined to it the anthropomorphic symbol of an offended God. And it will moreover be asserted with vehemence, that in place of a Father whom men can love and venerate, we are giving them a mere philosophical formula, calling for no warmer feeling than calm intellectual assent.

Granting that our doctrine is philosophically the reverse of atheism, it will be urged that here extremes meet, and that an infinite and therefore unknowable God is practically equivalent to no God at all.

In reply to the latter objection it is hardly necessary again to remind the objector that upon similar grounds, and with equal plausibility, the early Christians were called atheists by their pagan adversaries. The reproach of atheism has been well defined, by Mr. R. W. Mackay, to be the reproach which the adherents of a lower creed endeavour to cast upon those of a higher one. The less anthropomorphic the symbol by which Deity is represented, the less readily imaginable it is as something which can be seen, or heard, or prayed to, the less existent does it appear. And as we proceed to take away, one by one, the attributes which limit Deity, and enable it to be classified, we seem, no doubt, to be gradually destroying it altogether. Nevertheless, to him who has thus far intelligently followed this exposition, it will not be necessary to demonstrate that the symbolization of Deity indicated by the profoundest scientific analysis of to-day is as practically real as the symbolization which has resulted from the attempts of antiquity to perform such an analysis, and is in every way more satisfactory alike to head and heart. To him the most refined anthropomorphism to be met with in current theological treatises will no doubt seem as unsatisfactory as the anthropomorphism of orthodox "revivalists" must seem to Mr. Hutton or Mr. Martineau.

Indeed there are few philosophical terms which have more thoroughly brought out the inveterate tendency of men to mistake the counters of thought for its hard money than this term "Unknowable." Alike from Idealists and Positivists, from theologians of every school and from penny-a-liners of no school, we hear long arguments based upon the vague connotations which the word "Unknowable" calls up, without any reference to the precise sense in which the symbol is

used in Mr. Spencer's philosophy,—nay, without even a suspicion that the symbol may have a precise value in some measure purified from such connotations. At this stage of our exposition, it is enough to suggest the fallaciousness of such argumentation, without characterizing it in detail. It is enough to remind the reader that Deity is unknowable just in so far as it is not manifested to consciousness through the phenomenal world,—knowable just in so far as it is thus manifested; unknowable in so far as infinite and absolute,—knowable in the order of its phenomenal manifestations; knowable, in a symbolic way, as the Power which is disclosed in every throb of the mighty rhythmic life of the universe; knowable as the eternal Source of a Moral Law which is implicated with each action of our lives, and in obedience to which lies our only guaranty of the happiness which is incorruptible, and which neither inevitable misfortune nor unmerited obloquy can take away. Thus, though we may not by searching find out God, though we may not compass infinitude or attain to absolute knowledge, we may at least know all that it concerns us to know, as intelligent and responsible beings.[1] They who seek to know more than this, to transcend the conditions under which alone is knowledge possible, are, in Goethe's profound language, as wise as little children who, when they have looked into a mirror, turn it around to see what is behind it.

To the other objection above hinted at it may be replied that undoubtedly the conception of sin here developed is too abstract to awaken the needful feelings in any save those who have obtained, either through their own inquiries or by the aid of instruction from others, a firm grasp of some philosophic theory of the universe like the one crudely sketched in the present work. For the larger part of the world to-day the anthropomorphic doctrine of sin is unquestionably the better one,—and it is the doctrine held by

[1] See above, vol. i. pp. 95, 96.

the larger part of the world. If it were possible for men to come by the thousand, as on a second day of Pentecost, and embrace the views here expounded, or others like them, without having slowly and surely grown to them, there would be great risk of their going away with a frail and unserviceable religious theory. But as it is absolutely certain that such views will never become prevalent until the scientific philosophy upon which they are based has become generally understood and accepted, and as by that time they will necessarily have come to appear quite substantial and practical, there appears to be but little weight in the objection referred to.

Indeed, as the next chapter will plainly show, nothing can be farther from the intentions of the scientific thinker than the demand that contemporary society shall give up any of the religious doctrines with which it is able to rest contented, in exchange for doctrines which to all minds save those sufficiently instructed in science are likely to seem shadowy and over-subtle. Far from proposing to institute a new religion which, like Islam, is to overrun the world and wrench all men suddenly from their idols, our aim is simply to point out some of the more important modifications which current religious doctrines seem destined to undergo in becoming accepted and assimilated by thinkers whose theories of things are based wholly upon irrefragable scientific truths. That the Doctrine of Evolution, which is now the possession of a few disciplined minds, will eventually become the common property of the whole civilized portion of the human race, is, to say the least, very highly probable. In view of this probability, it seems to me a worthy end for our philosophic inquiry, if we can ascertain that, in spite of the total change in the symbols by which religious faith finds its expression, nevertheless the religious attitude of mankind will remain, in all essential respects, unchanged. I shall endeavour to show, therefore, in the following chapter,

that with reference to the fundamental truths of Christianity, and likewise with reference to the time-honoured institutions which are woven into the fabric of modern society, our Cosmic Philosophy is eminently conservative,—owning no fellowship either with the radical Infidelity of the eighteenth century or with the world-mending schemes of Positivism.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CRITICAL ATTITUDE OF PHILOSOPHY.

OUR outline-sketch of the Cosmic Philosophy based on the Doctrine of Evolution would remain seriously defective without some account of its critical bearing with reference to past and present religious beliefs and social institutions. Since the reception of a number of definite opinions concerning man in his relations to the universe and to his fellow-creatures must leave their possessor in a certain characteristic attitude,—aggressive or sympathetic, iconoclastic or conservative,—toward the multitude of opposite or conflicting opinions by which he is surrounded, it becomes desirable for us to ascertain whether the critical temper of our Cosmic Philosophy tends toward the subversion or the conservation of that complex aggregate of beliefs and ordinances which make up the social order amid which we live. Our object will be best attained, and our results will be most clearly presented, if we begin by considering some of the philosophic contrasts between the statical and dynamical habits of thinking, to which attention was called in an earlier chapter.

A statical view of things, as I have above defined it, is one which is adjusted solely or chiefly to relations existing in the immediate environment of the thinker. Certain groups

of physical phenomena, certain psychical prejudices, certain social customs, having existed with tolerable uniformity over a limited portion of the earth's surface, it is assumed either that the given phenomena have always existed, or at least that they enter by divine pre-arrangement into the eternal order of things in such a way that any thorough-going alteration of them must involve universal anarchy and ruin. The fundamental doctrine of the philosophy which is determined by this statical habit of interpreting phenomena, is the Doctrine of Creation. The world is supposed to have been suddenly brought into existence at some assignable epoch, since which time it has remained substantially unaltered. Existing races of sentient creatures are held to have been created by a miraculous fiat in accordance with sundry organic types which, as representing unchangeable ideas in the Divine Mind, can never be altered by physical circumstances. The social institutions also, amid which the particular statical theory originates, are either referred back to the foundation of the world, as is the case in early and barbaric mythologies; or else, as is the case with modern uneducated Christians, they are supposed to have been introduced by miracle at a definite era of history. In similar wise the existing order of things is legitimately to endure until abruptly terminated by the direct intervention of an extra-cosmic Power endowed with the anthropomorphic attributes of cherishing intentions and of acting out its good pleasure. Facts of palæontology, such as the extinction of myriads of ancient animal and vegetal species, are explained as the result of innumerable catastrophes determined by this same extra-cosmic Deity; and strange geologic phenomena are interpreted by the myth of a universal deluge which left them once for all just as we see them. Likewise the social institutions and the religious beliefs now existing by express divine sanction, must remain essentially unaltered under penalty of divine wrath as manifested

in the infliction upon society of the evils of atheism and anarchy. Hence, as the Doctrine of Creation is itself held to be one of these divinely-sanctioned religious beliefs, the scientific tendency to supersede this doctrine by the conception of God as manifested not in spasmodic acts of miracle, but in the gradual and orderly evolution of things, is stigmatized as an atheistical tendency, and the upholders of the new view are naturally enough accredited with a desire to subvert the foundations of religion and of good conduct. Hence it is that even such scientific writers as Mr. Mivart—unable to escape the evidence in favour of Evolution which is supplied by their own studies, yet somewhat desperately clinging to the philosophic views which are founded upon the Doctrine of Creation—are now and then guilty of remarks much better befitting ignorant priests than men who have lived in direct contact with modern scientific thought. That dominance of the statical habit of thinking, which leads Mr. Mivart to prefer the irregular action of "sudden jumps" to the slow but regular operation of natural selection, leads him also to assert that the Doctrine of Evolution, as consistently held by Prof. Huxley, tends toward the intellectual and moral degradation of mankind and toward the genesis of "horrors worse than those of the Parisian Commune!"[1]

Before proceeding to show how assertions of this sort are, from the evolutionist's point of view, as reckless and absurd as, from Mr. Mivart's point of view, they are justifiable and logical, let us note that the statical habit of thinking is by no means monopolized by the orthodox, or by those whose philosophic theories consist mainly of elements inherited from primeval mythology. The progress of scientific discovery since the time of Galileo and Bacon has but gradually, and as its newest result, established the Doctrine of Evolution; yet it has, from the very outset, assumed a hostile

[1] *Contemporary Review*, January 1872, p. 196.

attitude toward the body of mythical conceptions of which the current Christian theologies have been largely made up. The consequence of this has been the rise of a purely negative iconoclastic style of criticism, both in religion and in politics, which, in spite of its deadly hostility to the prevailing orthodoxy, has nevertheless been equally characterized by theories and aims which are the products of the old statical habits of thought. While orthodoxy and its companion legitimism have regarded the existing religious and social order, not as a product of evolution, but as a divinely-appointed and therefore eternally sacred order of things; on the other hand iconoclasm, whether manifested in religion or in politics, has regarded the existing order of things, not as a product of evolution, but as the work of artful priests and legislators of antiquity, which may accordingly be destroyed as summarily as it was created. Even while justly inveighing, therefore, against patent absurdities or flagrant wrongs in the established order of things, the iconoclast proceeds from a point of view as untenable as that occupied by his orthodox antagonist. Rejecting the mythical conception of the established order as in any especial sense divinely-appointed, he nevertheless borrows from the old mythology its notion of cataclysms, and vainly imagines that beliefs and institutions which suit the intellectual and moral needs of half the world can be incontinently eradicated or overthrown by direct assaults from without. Reasoning, then, upon this inadequate basis, and being as incapable of appreciating sympathetically the beliefs of a bygone age as his orthodox opponent is incapable of emancipating himself from such beliefs, the controversy between the two becomes naturally barren of profit though fruitful in recrimination; and each regards the other with a dislike or a distrust which, though justifiable enough when considered from the points of view respectively occupied by the antagonists, nevertheless

seems barbaric or childish to those who have reached a higher stand-point.

This higher stand-point is furnished by what I have called the dynamical habit of looking at things as continually changing in a definite and irreversible order of sequence. That this habit should not have been acquired, save by two or three isolated minds, until the present century, is not to be wondered at, since for the full acquirement of it there is needed a familiarity with scientific conceptions of genesis which could not have been gained at any earlier date. But as soon as the tendency to contemplate all phenomena as the products of preceding phenomena has become fairly established, a marked change is noticeable in the current style of criticism. The comparative method is found to be as applicable to religious beliefs and social or political institutions as it is to placental mammals or to pluperfect tenses. And so the habit of regarding the existing order of things as on the one hand ordained of God or on the other hand maliciously contrived by the Devil gradually fades away, and is replaced by the habit of regarding it as evolved from some preceding order of things, and as in turn destined normally to evolve some future order. Hence the evolutionist perceives that it is not by mere controversial argument that mankind can be led to exchange the mythological for the scientific point of view. He regards the process as one, not of sudden conversion, but of slow growth, which can be accomplished only by the gradual acquirement of new habits of thought,—habits that are formed day by day and year by year, in the course of a long contact, whether immediate or not, with the results of scientific inquiry. Thus the evolutionist owns no fellowship with Jacobins and Infidels, for he has learned that engrained habits of thought and favourite theories of the world, being the products of circumstances, must be to a certain extent adapted to the circumstances amid which they exist; and he knows that they cannot be

destroyed, and ought not to be destroyed, save as they are gradually supplanted by habits of thought that are relatively more accurate and by theories of the world that are relatively more complete.

In view of these considerations we may the better comprehend the significance—upon which I formerly (Part I. chap. vii.) insisted—of the change in the attitude of philosophy of which Comte's celebrated doctrine of the "Three Stages" was partly the cause and partly the symptom. In spite of his hostility to the Doctrine of Evolution, in most of the forms in which he came into contact with it as technically stated, Comte was nevertheless thoroughly inspired by the comparative method, so far as the study of history was concerned. As far as was possible with his slender scientific resources, he looked at human affairs with the eye of an evolutionist. When he announced it as a law that every human conception must pass through three stages—the theological, the metaphysical, and the positive—though his statement was a crude one, it nevertheless clearly showed that a time had come when opinions were no longer to be tried by their conformity to some absolute standard, whether of orthodoxy or of radicalism, but were henceforth to be estimated in their relations to the circumstances which had given rise to them.

Those who have most carefully studied the iconoclastic philosophy of Voltaire and the *Encyclopédistes* of the eighteenth century, will best appreciate the character and extent of the revolution in the attitude of philosophy which was effected by this new method of criticism. In the opinion of those metaphysical thinkers, everything old was wrong, and anything new was likely to be right. They classified men, not relatively, as ancients, mediævals and moderns, but absolutely as fools and philosophers; the philosophers being all who subscribed to the doctrines of the *Encyclopédie*, the fools being all those who believed in miracles or in a personal God.

So utterly destitute were they of that historic sense which enables the critic to enter into the spirit of the epoch which he is criticizing, that they could not interpret the mythology of antiquity and the theologic dogmas of the mediæval Church otherwise than as a set of ingenious devices contrived by priests and rulers for the ensnaring and subjugation of mankind. Perhaps nothing can better illustrate the barrenness of their point of view than their undiscriminating admiration for the emperor Julian, whose memory they exalted because of his attempt to stop the progress of Christianity; this being the very reason for which that monarch is now justly regarded as one of the most blindly retrograde statesmen that ever lived. Such was their criticism—a mere bald negation and disavowal of all that had preceded them. And such being their criticism, such also was their political philosophy—an unqualified protest, primarily against feudalism, monopoly and divine right, but ultimately, as carried out by Rousseau, against all constraint whatever of man by man, and therefore against the very constitution of society. The immortal pamphlet in which this greatest of sophists sought to demonstrate that all civilization, all science, and all speculative culture is but an error and a failure, and that the only remedy lies in a return to primitive barbarism,—was the legitimate outcome and *reductio ad absurdum* of a philosophy which began by forcibly severing itself from all historic sympathy with the time-hallowed traditions of our race.

Such a philosophy may end, as it has ended, in anarchy of thought, but not in rational conviction. It cannot organize a new framework of opinions, nor can it even thoroughly accomplish the task of destroying the old framework. It may indeed, as it has done here and there, knock the venerable edifice into unshapely ruin, but it cannot sweep away the cumbersome débris, and leave the ground clear for the erection of a new and more permanent structure. It discredits altogether too profoundly the earnest work of that

average human intelligence of past times, from which all our individual intelligences, with all their real or fancied enlightenment, are both by instruction and by inheritance derived. To refute the mediæval conception of the world, without accounting for its long predominance, was to leave it but half refuted. And accordingly, when this negative philosophy was brought to a practical test by the Revolution of 1789, its inefficiency, both for construction of the new, and for thorough destruction of the old, was made painfully manifest. It soon became evident that more than one brick of the mediæval edifice had been left standing, to serve as an obstruction. In France—then the centre of the European intellectual movement—there set in a powerful reaction. Against the revolutionary school of negative philosophers and anarchical statesmen, there asserted itself a retrograde school, which saw no escape save in a return to the mediæval conception of the world and a renewal of adherence to mediæval principles of action. This retrograde movement was represented in politics by Napoleon, the latter half of whose career was characterized by the conscious effort to imitate the achievements of Charles the Great; in literature by Chateaubriand; in psychology by Laromiguière and Maine de Biran; and in general philosophy by Joseph de Maistre. The last-named writer, who, for reasons easily explicable, has been too little studied, and whose true position in the history of thought Comte was the first to perceive and point out, will perhaps be remembered by future generations as the last heroic champion of a lost cause. Like Don Diego Garcia, whom Cervantes has immortalized, this unterrified knight took it upon himself to defend single-handed the fastnesses of mediæval theology against the whole invading army of modern scientific conceptions. With that uncompromising fanaticism which characterizes men who abandon critical reflection in order to constitute themselves the advocates of a cause, De Maistre undertook to annihilate physical

science and the group of philosophic notions to which its discoveries had given rise. According to him, Kant was an ignorant charlatan, Bacon an atheist in hypocritical disguise, and the so-called Baconian philosophy "a spiritless materialism," uncertain and unsteady in its expression, frivolous in tone, and full of fallacies in every assertion. In place of this "spiritless materialism" he would give us the full-blown Catholicism of the days of Hildebrand, every subsequent variation from which has, in his opinion, been due, not to disinterested seeking after higher truth, but to a madness of neologism, a diseased craving after new and strange devices.

In these interesting opinions—interesting because they come, not from a peevish and ignorant priest, but from a man of wide culture, worldly wisdom, and undoubted intellectual power—may be seen the violence of the reaction against that negative philosophy which, in its effort to break entirely with the past, had assisted in bringing about the speculative atheism and practical anarchy of 1793. We have now to note that, from the statical point of view which he occupied, De Maistre was perfectly right in regarding modern scientific thought as an enemy to society which must be put down at whatever cost. For as modern science had not yet reached that conception of gradual change which underlies the Doctrine of Evolution, while it had become distinctly conscious of its hostility to the current mythologies, it assumed the attitude of Atheism with reference to Christian theology and of Jacobinism with reference to the institutions of Christian society. Now it is perfectly true that the practical outcome of these kindred forms of iconoclasm, could they be allowed to have their way unhindered, would be the dissolution of society and the return to primeval barbarism. For since it is impossible for a given state of civilization to be made to order, even by the greatest political genius, or to be produced in any way save by evolution from an antecedent state, it follows that the dissolution of the

social relations existing at any epoch would simply leave the work of civilization to be (at least, to a great extent) done over again. An instructive historical example of such a dissolution of social relations, partially effected, and of the consequent partial return toward barbarism, is to be found in the history of Romanized Europe from the fourth to the tenth centuries of the Christian era. And as this partial dissolution cannot be referred solely to the barbaric attacks from without—which during at least seven centuries had been steadily kept up without impairing the integrity of the Empire—it must be referred to causes operative within; to the demoralization consequent upon general scepticism as to the validity of the principles of action by which men had formerly been guided. Now the violent breaking up of the feudal and mediæval Christian system, which occurred during the last century, was attended by some of the same dangerous symptoms as those which marked the dissolution of ancient polytheism and ancient notions of civic patriotism; though in the modern case the succession of phenomena was more rapid, and there were no assaults from outside barbarism to complicate matters. We have lately remarked upon the curious phenomenon of a free-thinker, like Rousseau, openly advocating a return to barbarism, upon the ground—which admirably illustrates his statical view of things—that social relations were due to a primitive contract, from which the contracting parties might at any time withdraw. It is also worth noting that, under the practical application of Rousseau's doctrines by his apparently well-meaning but narrow-minded and fanatical disciple, Robespierre, the rejection of Christianity was followed by an act of adoration toward a courtesan which would have been more in keeping with early polytheistic ages, and the overthrow of feudal tyranny was followed by a mode of settling political questions such as is normally practised only among societies of primitive type. It is significant also, to the

evolutionist, that this partial dissolution of social relations should have been followed by that disgraceful epoch in which principles of international equity worthy only of Attila or Genghis Khan were embodied in the barbarous ethical code of the First Empire.

A still more complete illustration of the tendency of pure iconoclasm toward social dissolution is to be found in certain radical theories concerning labour, property, and marriage, which have been current during the present century among people untrained in science and unfamiliar with the lessons of history, and which played their part in shaping the policy of the Parisian Commune of 1871. For the purposes of our inquiry it is not necessary for me to offer a matured judgment concerning this unfortunate historical transaction in all its actual complexity, even were I competent to do so. It is enough for us to remember that among those political leaders who sought to inaugurate the reign of the Commune, a considerable number professed to hold the doctrines commonly known as communistic, and that the social relations which they were intent upon establishing are precisely those which Sir Henry Maine has shown to have existed among primeval men, and which exist to-day among the lowest races. This desire to return to the community of property and of wives characteristic of primitive savagery, to regulate human concerns by *status* and not by contract, to crush out capital and with it the possibility of any industrial integration, to abolish the incentives which make man sow to-day that he may reap in the future, to destroy social differentiation by constraining all persons alike to manual labour, to strangle intellectual progress by permitting scientific inquiry only to such as might succeed in convincing a committee of ignorant workmen that their discoveries were likely to be practically useful, to smother all individualism under a social tyranny more absolute than the Hindu despotism of caste; this desire, it is obvious, is simply the abnormal desire to

undo every one of the things in the doing of which we have seen that social evolution consists. It is, in short, the theory of Rousseau unflinchingly carried into details, though, in deference to the watchwords of the present age, it is couched in expressions which imply a sympathy with human progress.

For such abnormal phenomena as those of the Terror and the Commune, there is no doubt a deeper cause than the prevalence of anarchical social and religious theories. Such phenomena are strictly analogous to those of disease, indicating that sundry social functions are out of balance, and that the social organism is violently striving to regain equilibrium even at the risk of premature dissolution. Scientifically considered, the Commune was a case of retrograde metamorphosis, quite analogous to cancer in the individual organism; and it was due to a minor failure of adjustment incident upon a rapid change in the social environment. Increased wealth and a heightened standard of comfortable living, entailing prolonged labour and more intense brain-work, leave the least industrious and intelligent members of the community in misery little removed from starvation. And while under the unchecked operation of natural selection these unadapted members of the community would soon perish, as the lunatic and the drunkard would perish, we nevertheless save them artificially, as we artificially protect the drunkard and the lúnatic; and we do so rightly, because the repression of our humanitarian feelings would entail far greater damage to society than the survival of these incapables. But in surviving they constitute a growth of a lower order of vitality, like a cancer implanted in nobler tissues, and their effort is to abolish a civilization of which their own misery is, for the time being, the inevitable result, and to reinstate that primitive order of things in which the strong fist and the strong passions were not yet at the mercy of the keen intelligence and the large capacity for toil. Here, as in the case of the abnormal individual desires

treated in the concluding chapter of Part II., we find a number of unadjusted cravings which natural selection can but imperfectly deal with, and which it must be left for some process of direct adaptation slowly to adjust. An analogous though not entirely similar explanation will apply to the case of Robespierre and the Terror.

But while such pathological phenomena can by no means be explained as solely due to certain anarchical theories social and religious, it still remains true that between the abnormal social phenomena and the anarchical theories there is a very close kinship; such that the theory finds itself practically incarnated in the social event, while it is through the anarchical theory that the abnormal social event finds itself redeemed from the odium attaching to sheer criminal malevolence, and entitled to that slight modicum of credit which we are wont to accord to sincerity when allied with destructive fanaticism. It is as true that the iconoclastic theory naturally lends itself to the purposes of the Jacobin or the Communist, as it is that the Jacobin or the Communist naturally justifies to himself his purposes by an appeal to the iconoclastic theory. Hence it is undeniable that when modern scientific thought, not yet having reached a dynamical view of things, allied itself to the spirit of mere negative protest against existing beliefs and institutions, it might well have seemed to a thinker like De Maistre to be irreconcilably hostile to all the habits and aspirations which give to civilized life its value.

Now the dynamical view of things, however crudely announced by Comte in his theory of the "Three Stages," differed widely from the statical view of De Maistre; for it proclaimed that we must found our general conception of the world and our plans for social amelioration upon a synthesis of special scientific truths, established by the use of the objective method, and not upon a congeries of theological dogmas, established originally by the use of the subjective

method, and afterwards certified only by a perennial appeal to some authority assumed as infallible. It differed equally from the statical view represented by the iconoclasm of the eighteenth century; for it said, we cannot ignore the past, or treat it with contumely: the men who originated mythological explanations of natural phenomena were neither knaves nor the dupes of knaves, but genuine philosophers who made the best use of such implements of research as lay before them: men's conceptions of the world have been progressively stripped of their anthropomorphic vestments, and the scientific mode of thought, which, manifesting itself here and there in fragmentary generalizations, has all along been determining the progress, must ultimately, organized in a series of grand, all-embracing generalizations, reign supreme: the history of human thought is thus a development, and each creed or system, no matter how absurd it may at first appear, is a phase of that development; so that to construct a philosophy or a polity *de novo*, out of abstract principles, without reference to the concrete facts of past history, is simply to build a castle in the air.

Thus would Comte have answered on the one hand the Jacobins and on the other hand the Ultramontanes, with both of whom he has, by a strange but not inexplicable fate, been charged with owning fellowship. Thus we arrive at the philosophic explanation of the unparalleled range of his historic sympathies, of the generous recognition which he was ever ready to accord to the crude but needful and serviceable beliefs and institutions of earlier ages, and to their representative men of whatever creed. And thus, too, we are enabled to appreciate one of Comte's principal reasons for calling his system of philosophy "Positive." In sharp contrast with the *negative* philosophy of the atheists and Jacobins, its purpose was not to overthrow old beliefs by an assault from without, but to construct, upon the basis of the positive truths already furnished by science, a new system of

beliefs, which should account for the old ones and supplant them by sheer force of its superior catholicity. For five centuries, said Comte, science has been arrayed in apparent hostility to religion, and philosophy has been chiefly employed in disintegrating Christian theology and feudalism: the time has now come for this negative work to be regarded only as incidental to the positive work of integrating scientific truths into a body of philosophic doctrine, upon which may ultimately rest a new theory of religion and a reorganized social polity.

As thus described, the critical attitude assumed by Positivism may appear to be identical with that which is the result of a thorough adherence to the Doctrine of Evolution. There is, however, a profound difference between the position of the evolutionist and that of the positivist, which it is well worth our while to characterize at some length, even at the risk of an apparent digression. Our subject is so very complex, by reason of the wide range of its practical applications, that we shall be greatly helped—as we have already on many occasions been helped—by contrasting our own view with that Comtean view which superficially resembles it. When we have noticed the two great errors—both of them due to imperfect apprehension of the nature of evolution, which left Comte, in spite of himself, in an attitude of hostility both to the current Christian theology and to the existing framework of society, we shall have virtually illustrated, with satisfactory clearness, our own conservative point of view.

In the chapter on Anthropomorphism and Cosmism the first of the two fatal errors of Positivism was elaborately described and criticized. It was shown that, although by his theory of the three stages Comte announced his philosophy as a continuous development from older theological philosophies, and although he declared himself determined not to break with the past, yet nevertheless his explicit ignoring of Deity constituted in itself a breach with the past which no

amount of continuity in other respects could remedy or atone for. We saw that, in spite of their numberless superficial differences, all historic religions have been at one in the affirmation of a Supreme Power upon which man is dependent; and we saw that with respect to this affirmation our Cosmic Philosophy is as much at one with Christianity as Christianity is at one with older religious philosophies. On the other hand it is self-evident that there can be no continuity of development between a system of thought which affirms this truth and a system of thought which either denies it, like Atheism, or ignores it, like Positivism. In this respect it cannot be questioned that Comte broke with the past as completely as if he had been a dogmatic atheist. Hence is to be explained his utterly unphilosophical attempt to found a new religion. In his earlier scheme no place is left for religion at all; but when, by an afterthought, he recognized the existence in mankind of a religious sentiment which demands satisfaction, his ignoring of Deity led him to the construction of an artificial religious scheme from which the essential element of religion was entirely omitted. Had he recognized this essential element, he would have seen that the time for instituting new religions has long since passed by, and that religious progress in future is possible only through the gradual evolution of Christianity itself into higher and higher forms.

The second fatal error in Positivism is the opinion that society can be reorganized by philosophy. To demonstrate anew the fallaciousness of this opinion, which underlies the whole Comtean effort to reconstruct human society after a utopian model, would be but to repeat the arguments which have formed the woof of our chapters on sociology. If there is any convincing power in the multitude of mutually harmonious proofs which were there accumulated, we must be already convinced that men are civilized, not by a mere change in their formulas of belief, but only by a change in

their type of character which can be effected only through a considerable lapse of time. This is the reason why civilizations cannot be made, but must grow. We differ from the ancient Angles and Saxons, not so much because we know more than they knew, as because we have undergone fifteen centuries more of social discipline which has perceptibly modified our character, and with it our moral ideals. If Comte had ever firmly grasped the theorem "that society is to be reorganized only by the accumulated effects of habit upon character," he would have held himself aloof from projects which could have no meaning save on the hypothesis that society can be reorganized by philosophy. He would have seen that though the fruit of the tree of knowledge may make us like gods, knowing good and evil, it is only the tree of life which can renovate our souls and fit us for Paradise.

But now, since society grows, but is not made; since men cannot be *taught* a higher state of civilization, but can only be *bred* into it; it follows that the whole Comtean attempt to construct an ideal Polity, including a new religion and new social institutions, was—save as a warning for future thinkers—just so much labour thrown away. After all his profound and elaborate survey of human history, Comte strangely forgot that the sum-total of beliefs and institutions in the twentieth century will be the legitimate offspring of the sum-total of beliefs and institutions in the nineteenth, but can in no case be the offspring of an individual intellect, even were that intellect ten times more powerful than Comte's. No individual will has ever succeeded in remodelling society in conformity to a prescribed ideal. Perhaps no single man, if we except the Founder of Christianity, has ever made his individual character and genius count for so much in the subsequent direction of human events as Julius Cæsar. But Cæsar never reconstructed society, and, though not instructed in the Doctrine of Evolution, would

have felt such a task to be simply an impossibility. The secret of Cæsar's greatness, and of his success, lay in the wondrous common-sense with which he perceived the true significance of contemporary events, and in the unflinching perseverance with which he wrought out the political system for which society was already yearning, and which the circumstances of the times rendered indispensable to the maintenance of civilization. This has been the secret of the success of all statesmen of the highest order; of Charles the Great and Hildebrand, as well as of William the Silent, Edward I. of England, Henry IV. of France, and Richelieu. By a sagacious instinct these great men felt, though they could not scientifically explain, the direction in which human affairs were naturally tending; and it was because they shaped their efforts with a view to assist, and not to check or warp, the resistless tendencies of society, that they succeeded in stamping their individualities so powerfully upon history. It is from the lack of this sagacity that the ablest retrograde statesmen have either failed utterly, or at best succeeded only in working wanton mischief. Julian, and Philip II. of Spain, occupied positions which enabled them to wield enormous power, and the former was a man of signal ability and undoubtedly good intentions. Yet Julian wholly failed to see that Platonic Paganism, however well adapted it may have been to the sporadic, municipal civilization of antiquity, was no longer adapted to the intellectual and moral needs of men living under the Roman Empire. Hence his insensate attempt to destroy the only religious organization capable of holding society together during the perilous times that were coming; an attempt which his early death fortunately frustrated before it had been persisted in long enough to work much social disturbance. Philip II., a man of mediocre ability and hopelessly vulgar egoism, might yet have done a good work, could he ever have been brought to understand the way in which the world was

moving, and would move in spite of him. Yet he thought to establish in Romanized Europe an Oriental patriarchal despotism, and he thought by mere brute force to bring over half the civilized world to a religious system which it had for ever discarded. And thus, though he wielded a power such as no man for centuries had wielded before him, he achieved absolutely nothing. At the end of his evil career, he was farther from each of his cherished aims than at the beginning. The physical power of Spain was exhausted in the vain effort to stem the course of events, and all the credit the son of Charles V. ever earned was that of being one of the most mischievous among the enemies of the human race.

Now, our practical object in studying human progress scientifically is to be able to arrive at certain definite general principles of statesmanship. In every branch of speculative or practical activity, men begin by reasoning from particulars to particulars, accomplishing their results by a kind of sagacious instinct which hits upon the means requisite for attaining a given end. But after a while, as science progresses, they establish general principles of action, and work with a distinct consciousness of the adaptation of the means employed to the end proposed. From being instinctive and irregular, their proceedings become ratiocinative and systematic; witness the whole history of industrial art. And, as that history shows, the more intelligent and coherent the course of proceeding, the less is the time and effort wasted in vain experiment. It is just the same in politics. We need to understand the conditions essential to progress, and the direction which progress is taking, that we may avoid the mischief entailed by stupid and ignorant legislation, and secure the benefits arising from legislation that is scientifically conceived and put into operation with a distinct consciousness of the ends to be secured. We need sociology that we may not waste our energies and damage society in

opposing the very reforms which a little science might tell us that the community requires and will have, sooner or later, in spite of us. I do not mean to say that a knowledge of the laws of history will alone suffice to make us statesmen. Science and art are two different things, and so are scientific genius and practical genius. But if a Themistokles or a Hildebrand were to arise among us, he would be all the more useful for working in conformity to scientific principles, instead of trusting solely to his native sagacity. It is when genius works with vision that it achieves its utmost. And when we cannot have genius, by all means let us have vision, so far as science can impart it to us. Daily we grow indignant over the hand-to-mouth policy of our legislators, which inflicts so much needless suffering, and makes it so much harder for all of us to earn our bread. But we must remember that such a policy is the natural outcome of a foolish neglect of the lessons which history has to teach, and which may be read by anyone who holds the scientific clue to them.

Such is our practical object, and our sole practical object, in studying sociology as a science. To attempt to construct an ideal polity, by adopting which society is to remodel itself, is to show that we have studied that science to little purpose. For if history can teach us anything, it can teach us that civilization is a slow growth, of which no one can foresee, save in its most general features, the final result; far less force that result prematurely merely by appeals to men's judgment.

How utterly Comte ignored all this—the plain teaching both of historic induction, and of deduction from the laws of organic life—can be appreciated only when we read the insane pages in which he attempts to predict the immediate future. He by no means intended that society should wait till a remote era for the entire realization of his project. In seven years the control of public education in France was to

be given to Comte. In twelve years the Emperor Napoleon was to resign in favour of a Comtist triumvirate. In thirty-three years the religion of Humanity was to be definitely established. As Mr. Mill says, "a man may be deemed happy, but scarcely modest, who had such boundless confidence in his own powers of foresight, and expected to complete a triumph of his own ideas on the reconstitution of society within the possible limits of his life-time. If he could live (he said) to the age of Fontenelle, or of Hobbes, or even of Voltaire, he should see all this realized, or as good as realized."

But what we have here to note is not especially the personal conceit of the project, or the marks of insanity clearly indicated in these inordinate expectations; what we have to note is the mode of genesis of this wild scheme. Extravagant beyond all comparison as Comte's proposals for remodelling religion and society undoubtedly were, they can nevertheless be easily traced, in their general outlines, back to the two errors which I have above signalized as the fundamental errors of Positivism. The first error—the ignoring of Deity—necessitated a complete rupture with Christian forms of religion; and the second error—the belief that society can be reorganized by a change in formulas of belief—led naturally to the attempt to substitute a new religion for Christianity and a new kind of civilization for the existing civilization. Thus in spite of his keen historic appreciation of the excellence of Christianity, and in spite of his sympathetic critical attitude, was Comte logically forced into a position quite as untenable as that held by the atheists and Jacobins. And now let us observe how, even as with these iconoclasts, the social state which Comte expected to substitute within forty years for the existing social state, was in all essential respects a retrogradation toward a more primitive structure of society. The positivist utopia is not indeed a return to

pristine savagery, like the utopia of Rousseau and his followers, but it is a reversion toward a spiritual despotism, such as was realized in ancient Egypt, and such as might perhaps have been realized in mediæval Europe, had not the policy of the Emperors opposed a salutary check to the policy of the Popes. In the chapter on the Evolution of Society, we found it to be the chief characteristic distinguishing social progress from the lower orders of organic evolution, that individuals, regarded as units of the community, are continually acquiring greater and greater freedom of action, consistently with the stability of the community. Now Comte's ideal state of society is a state in which the units of the community possess no more individual freedom than the cells which make up the tissues of a vertebrate animal. It is an absolute spiritual despotism,—or if not technically a despotism, we may at least say of it, as Mr. Grote says of Plato's imaginary commonwealth, that it is a state in which existence would be intolerable to anyone not shaped upon the Comtean model. Public opinion is to be controlled by a priestly class of philosophers, against whose authority all revolt would be as useless as the rebellion of a mediæval monarch against a papal interdict. As Mr. Spencer sums it up: the Comtist "ideal of society is one in which *government* is developed to the greatest extent, in which class-functions are far more under conscious public regulation than now, in which hierarchical organization with unquestioned authority shall guide everything—in which the individual life shall be subordinated in the greatest degree to the social life." Now this cannot be unless the development of society as it has hitherto proceeded is to be diametrically reversed. As our whole inquiry into the process of social evolution has taught us, "the form of society towards which we are progressing is one in which *government* will be reduced to the smallest amount possible, and *freedom* increased to the greatest amount possible; one

in which human nature will have become so moulded by social discipline into fitness for the social state, that it will need little external restraint, but will be self-restrained; one in which the citizen will tolerate no interference with his freedom, save that which maintains the equal freedom of others; one in which the spontaneous cooperation which has developed our industrial system, and is now developing it with increased rapidity, will produce agencies for the discharge of nearly all social functions, and will leave to the primary governmental agency nothing beyond the function of maintaining those conditions to free action, which make such spontaneous cooperation possible; one in which individual life will thus be pushed to the greatest extent consistent with social life; and in which social life will have no other end than to maintain the completest sphere for individual life."[1]

If the scrutiny of these contrasted theorems still leaves us in any doubt as to the retrograde character of Comte's ideal society, a single practical illustration will more than suffice to convince us. We have seen that certain Jacobins of the Commune announced their intention to permit scientific research only to such persons as might succeed in convincing an examining-committee of average citizens that their researches were likely to be of direct practical value. I need not say that, if such a rule could be enforced, the intellectual advancement of mankind would be instantly arrested. It is interesting to observe that Comte entertained an intention not wholly dissimilar to this. Disgusted with the insatiable curiosity which leads scientific thinkers to pry into the secrets of nature in all directions at once, often spending years upon subjects which to self-complacent ignorance or Philistinism seem entirely trivial, Comte enacted that "some one problem should always be selected, the solution of which would be more important than any

[1] Spencer, *Recent Discussions*, p. 128.

other to the interests of humanity, and upon this the entire intellectual resources of the theoretic mind should be concentrated, until it is either resolved, or has to be given up as insoluble; after which mankind should go on to another, to be pursued with similar exclusiveness."[1] It only remains to add that this all-important problem was to be prescribed by the High Priest of Humanity. When now, knowing as we do Comte's intense aversion to certain kinds of inquiry, we consider what would have been the result could such a system have gone into operation forty years ago; when we reflect that Bessel would never have been allowed to measure the parallax of a star, that the cell-doctrine in biology would have been hopelessly doomed, that Mr. Darwin's researches would have been prohibited as useless, that the correlation of forces would have still remained undiscovered, that psychology would have been ruled out once for all, that the new chemistry would not have come into existence, and that spectrum analysis would never have been heard of; when we reflect upon all this, we may well thank God for the constitution of things which makes it impossible that the well-being of the human race should ever be irrevocably staked upon the wisdom or folly of a single speculative thinker.

So far as our present purpose is concerned, it would be time worse than wasted to present in further detail Comte's purely whimsical and arbitrary proposals for the remodelling of society. As questions of philosophy they possess neither interest nor value: they are interesting solely as throwing light upon the morbid psychology of a powerful mind, fertile in suggestions, but hopelessly deficient in humour. Whoever wishes to learn their character can do so at the expense of wading through one of the most dismal books in all literature —the *Catéchisme Positiviste*. Enough has been said to establish the fact that in breaking with the past and seeking to

[1] Mill, *Auguste Comte and Positivism*, p. 164.

remodel religion and society artificially, Comte yielded to the inevitable necessity which compels the would-be reconstructor of society to remodel it ideally upon a lower type than that which actually exists. He would have given us a religion without God and a society without freedom of action.

If we now pause for a moment, and gather up the different threads of the argument, we shall assist the comprehension of our own position, presently to be stated. Let us, then, contemplate in a single view the conclusions deducible from the foregoing series of criticisms.

We have seen the old statical habit of thought, as represented in the Doctrine of Creation, manifesting itself in rigid orthodoxy, both in religion and in politics. We have observed the way in which modern scientific inquiry, detecting numberless absurdities or anomalies in the religious and political orthodoxy inherited from mediæval times, yet retaining and carrying into its criticisms the statical habit of thought, has assumed an iconoclastic attitude with reference to the existing order of things. We have traced this iconoclastic attitude in the modern history of Atheism and Jacobinism, and have noted how its tendency is in the direction of social dissolution. We have found that the only possible result of a sudden and violent alteration of the existing order of things must be a retrogradation toward some lower order of things, characteristic of some less advanced type of civilization. And of this fatal necessity we have seen the most instructive example in the career of the Positive Philosophy. Though it had partially compassed, in an empirical fashion, the notion of development; though it was fully alive to the barrenness of iconoclastic methods; though it began by regarding itself as the normal product of a long course of speculative evolution;—nevertheless when, by its ignoring of Deity, Positivism found itself arrayed in sheer opposition to established and time-honoured theories, the resulting retrogradation was hardly less marked than it

had been in the case of atheistic Jacobinism. And when the notion (born of the statical habit of thought), that men's natural ways of thinking and acting can be suddenly changed by a change in philosophic formulas, was called to its aid, the result was that absurdest though most logically constructed of all utopias, the Positive Polity.

In view of these profoundly interesting and instructive conclusions, can we not, by sheer contrast, immediately discern what must be the critical attitude of any philosophy which is based upon the thorough and consistent recognition of the Doctrine of Evolution? We too, as well as the Positivists, have our ideal state of society,—a state well described in the passage above quoted from Mr. Spencer, in which the greatest possible fulness of life shall be ensured to each member of the community by the circumstance that in the long course of social equilibration the desires of each individual shall have become slowly moulded into harmony with the coexistent desires of neighbouring individuals. But as cataclysms and miracles and sudden creations have no place in our purely dynamical theory of things, we do not expect to see this ultimate state of society realized within half a century. We know full well that it can be realized only in the indefinitely remote future. Nay, since the conception of absolute finality is as inconsistent with the Doctrine of Evolution as is the conception of absolute beginning, we do not regard it as destined ever to be absolutely realized. That supreme epoch of social equilibrium in which every man shall love the Lord with all his heart and his neighbour even as himself, in which the beast shall have been worked out, and, in Tennyson's phrase, the ape and the tiger shall have been allowed to die within us, in which egoistic or antisocial impulses shall be self-restrained, and everyone shall spontaneously do that which tends towards the general happiness,—this supreme epoch is likely for ever to remain an ideal epoch which shall relatively be more and more dis-

tinctly realized without ever being realized absolutely, just as the hyperbola for ever approaches its asymptote without coming in contact with it. There will always be room left for that aspiration after a yet higher fulness of life, after a "closer walk with God," which, whether it be expressed by the symbols of science or by the symbols of mythology, is the indestructible essence of all religion. An absolutely perfect state of society would be, by a curious and instructive paradox, a state in which the religious sense would have no further function to subserve, because goodness would have become automatic and aspiration would be at an end.

But while our ideal state of society is one which can only be gradually, relatively, and approximatively realized, it has none the less a present existence as an ideal which we must ever strive to incarnate as far as possible in the concrete facts which make up the sum of our every-day life. There is a practical sense in which the evolutionist, no less than the radical sceptic or the orthodox believer, must recognize that he has a missionary function to fulfil. We do indeed aim, in conformity with surrounding conditions, at the realization of our social and ethical ideal,—seeking to do what within us lies to hasten the time when it may be proclaimed, with fresh significance, that the kingdom of heaven is at hand. But how shall we seek to effect our purpose? Shall we go forth to all the world and preach some "gospel of Evolution," in the hope that men, seeing the error of their ways, shall suddenly embrace the new faith and be henceforth spiritually healed? In two ways our philosophy has taught us the absurdity of such a proceeding. *First*, such doctrines are too subtle, too spiritual indeed, to be apprehended otherwise than by a slow process of growth, intellectual and moral. Accordingly, since men's theologies are narrowly implicated with their principles of action, the taking away of their theology by any other process than that of slowly

supplanting it by a new system of conceptions equally adapted to furnish general principles of action, would be to leave men trivial-minded and irreligious, with no rational motive but self-interest, no clearly-conceived end save the pleasure of the moment. The evolutionist, therefore, believing that faith in some controlling ideal is essential to right living, and that even an unscientific faith is infinitely better than aimless scepticism, does not go about pointing out to the orthodox the inconsistencies which he discerns in their system of beliefs. And while assured that the deanthropomorphizing process will continue to go on as it has gone on since the dawn of history, under the slow but unceasing stimulus of scientific generalization, he at the same time rejoices that a violent destruction of anthropomorphic conceptions is impossible. Refraining, therefore, from barren theologic controversy, his aim is to carry scientific methods and scientific interpretations into all departments of inquiry, in accordance with the profound aphorism of Dr. Newman: "False ideas may be refuted by argument, but only by true ideas can they be expelled." Have we not seen that our beliefs are in a measure wrought into the very substance of our brains, so that the process of eradicating them *must* be a process of substitution which, as involving structural changes, must needs be gradual?

But *secondly*, the evolutionist must recognize that, even were it possible to effect a sudden conversion of mankind to a faith based upon scientific knowledge, such a conversion would not bring about the desired result of inaugurating a higher and better state of society. Not by a change of opinion, but by a change of heart, is the grand desideratum to be obtained. It is not by accepting all the theorems comprised in the Doctrine of Evolution, or in any other doctrine whatever, that men are to obey the dictates of selfishness less and the dictates of sympathy more. Yet *this* is the transfer of allegiance upon which, as we have

elsewhere shown, the amelioration of society and the relief of man's estate depend.

And these considerations as to the critical attitude of the evolutionist with reference to theology will equally apply to his critical attitude with reference to politics, concerning which I need, therefore, add but few explanatory words. Since it is the plain teaching of history that the group of institutions making up the framework of society at any given period cannot be violently altered without entailing a partial disintegration of society; since any custom or observance can be safely discontinued only when the community has grown to the perception of its uselessness or absurdity; and, above all, since the integrity of society depends in an ultimate analysis, not upon its institutions (which may be as liberal in Mexico as in Massachusetts), but upon the integrity of its individual members; it follows that the evolutionist will look askance at the panaceas of radical world-menders, refusing to believe that the millennium can be coaxed or cheated into existence until men have learned, one and all, each for himself, to live rightly. The only utopian ideal which he can consistently cherish, is that of contributing his individual share of effort to the improvement of mankind by leading an upright life, and applying the principles of common-sense and of the highest ethics within his ken to whatever political and social questions may directly concern him as member of a progressive community.

When, therefore, we are asked how we shall seek to incarnate in fact our ethical and social ideal, the reply is: we must seek to realize this ideal, in so far as our frail half-developed natures will allow, by leading pure and upright lives, repressing the selfish impulses which are our legacy from the brute, obeying the dictates of sympathy whereby we are chiefly distinguished as human, and conforming as well as we may to the highest ethical code within our ken.

As the coral reef is built by millions of tiny polyps, each giving up his little life to the process, until a stately island arises in mid-ocean, so the ideal society of the future, with its exemption from the ills which we now suffer, will be the result of myriads of individual efforts towards greater completeness of life. Every temptation that is resisted, every sympathetic impulse that is discreetly yielded to, every noble aspiration that is encouraged, every sinful thought that is repressed, every bitter word that is withheld, adds its little item to the impetus of the great movement which is bearing Humanity onwards toward a richer life and a higher character. Out of individual rectitude comes the rectitude and happiness of the community; so that the ultimate salvation of mankind is to be wrought out solely by obedience to that religious instinct which, as shown in the preceding chapter, urges the individual, irrespective of utilitarian considerations, to live in conformity to nature's requirements. "Nearer, my God, to thee," is the prayer, dictated by the religious faith of past ages, to which the deepest scientific analysis of the future may add new meanings, but of which it can never impair the primary significance.

Thus with regard to its practical bearings upon human conduct, the religious attitude of our scientific philosophy seems to be absolutely identical with the religious attitude of Christianity. We arrive at a deeper reason than has hitherto been disclosed for the difference between our position with reference to Christianity, and that which has been assumed by Radicalism and by Positivism. It is not merely that we refuse to attack Christianity because we recognize its necessary adaptation to a certain stage of culture, not yet passed by the average minds of the community; it is that we still regard Christianity as, in the deepest sense, our own religion. Or, if a somewhat different form of statement be preferred, we regard it as a faith which, precisely in the act

of realizing more and more fully its own ideal, becomes more and more fully identified with the faith which we are conscious of cherishing. Instead of the intolerant hostility of the Infidel, or the indifferent neutrality of the Positivist, we offer cordial aid and sympathy. I cannot better illustrate the twofold source of this sympathy than by citing the words of a lady who is fairly entitled to rank as one of the most original and suggestive thinkers of our time. Speaking of the lower of the two lines of thought which determine the critical attitude of the evolutionist, Miss Hennell says:— "When we see the various modes of error in belief, no longer in the light of heresies that we have the right to punish, or even to despise, but only as the incomplete condition that must of necessity belong to that which has to ripen out of the lower state into the higher; and when we bethink ourselves that it is the matter of our own most cherished aspiration that our own condition, as presently occupied, has to appear in the very same light to the station to be attained hereafter; charity towards the imperfection is so inevitable that indeed it no longer requires to be insisted on as if it required inculcation. Our sphere of religious sympathy has been so much enlarged beyond its former bounds, that the original matter of duty has become matter of simple unquestioning feeling." Now this admirably illustrates what I have called the lower of the two lines of thought which determine our position: it explains our refusal to attack Christianity. The following deeply-meditated passage illustrates the higher line of thought, and shows why we identify our position with that which is held by Christianity. "Very slight ground of self-gratulation should I have found," says Miss Hennell, "in even the most palpable superiority of present faith that might have been gained, if the acquisition had really been made, as at first it appeared to me to be made, and as it must still appear to orthodox believers to be made, at the expense of the absolute subversal and denial of the faith that had

gone before it. If I could not now perceive that what was once true to me, and true to the world, was true for ever, in relation to what had to come after it, I do not deny to myself that I should inevitably fall away to cease believing at all henceforth both in myself and in the world. Yes: if I could not see in relation to Christianity, just as truly as was seen by the master-spirits of that religion in relation to Judaism, that neither of this later form of realization 'can one jot or tittle pass away, until all be fulfilled' in the newly-arriving doctrines of General Religion,—never, I am convinced, could the latter take any real hold upon me: never, in fact, could it *be* a religion to me."[1]

To those who still adhere to the sharp distinctions characteristic of the statical view of things, who carry into their estimate of religious opinions the conception of fixity of species, it may seem absurd or sophistical in us to assimilate with Christianity a system of thought which has entirely thrown off the mythologic symbols wherein Christianity has hitherto been clothed and whereby it is customarily recognized as possessing an individuality of its own. To such it naturally seems that the giving up of the symbol is the giving up of the reality, and that the critical attitude of him who has given up the symbol must be an attitude of radical hostility. But now, as the crowning result of the whole argument, we are enabled to show how the dynamical view of things disposes of this paradox. He who brings to his estimate of religious opinions a Darwinian habit of mind, must understand that a sudden and radical alteration of Christianity into something else is as impossible as the sudden and radical change of one type of organism into another. He will see that, while form after form has perished, the Life remains, incarnated in newer and higher forms. That which is fundamental in Christianity is not the mythologic superstratum, but the underlying spiritual

[1] Miss Hennell, *Present Religion*, pp. 50, 51.

principle. The mythologic symbols have changed from age to age. The constant element has been, on its intellectual side the recognition of Deity, and on its emotional side the yearning for closer union with Deity, or for a more complete spiritual life. And the three foregoing chapters have conclusively proved that this constant element, in both its aspects, remains unchanged in that religion whose symbols are shaped by science.

In using the phrase "Cosmic Theism," therefore, to denote the religious phase of the philosophy based upon the Doctrine of Evolution, I do not use it as descriptive of a new form of religion before which Christianity is gradually to disappear. I use it as descriptive of that less-anthropomorphic phase of religious theory into which the present more-anthropomorphic phase is likely to be slowly metamorphosed. The conflict, as it presents itself to my mind, is not between Christianity and any other embodiment of religion or irreligion. The conflict is between science and mythology, between Cosmism and Anthropomorphism. The result is, not the destruction of religion, but the substitution of a relatively adequate for a relatively inadequate set of symbols. In the scientific philosopher there may be as much of the real essence of Christianity as there was in the cloistered monk who preceded him; but he thinks in the language of a man and not in the language of a child.

The critical attitude of our philosophy with reference to the beliefs and the institutions amid which we live, has now been quite thoroughly defined both by what it is and by what it is not. We may now, I think, safely affirm that when Mr. Mivart accuses the Doctrine of Evolution of tending toward the intellectual and moral degradation of mankind and toward the genesis of atrocities worse than those of the Parisian Commune, he clearly shows that he has not thoroughly comprehended the implications of the doctrine. The conception of evolution, which he adopts

after a loose and inconsistent fashion in so far as his own special studies have constrained him to adopt it, remains nevertheless in his mind a barren conception. He quite fails to grasp the dynamical view of things, and therefore naturally regards the overthrow of Roman Catholic theology as equivalent to the inauguration of atheism and of anarchy. We have seen, on the other hand, that all the iconoclastic attacks which have been directed either against Christianity or against the existing order of society have been theoretically based upon fallacies which are incompatible with the Doctrine of Evolution. It has been shown that, upon our general theory of life, we can look, for the realization of our highest social ideal, only to the perfecting of individual character under the conditions at any time existing. And for the perfecting of individual character we must rely upon that increasing sense of divine omnipresence and that increasing aspiration after completeness of spiritual life, which, taken together, constitute the permanent element in Christianity. When we add that our ethical code, deduced theoretically from the conception of Life set forth at such length in the second part of this work, is at bottom identical with the ethical code sanctioned by the highest Christianity, it at last becomes apparent how truly conservative, in the best sense of the word, is the critical attitude of our philosophy.

The iconoclast, who has the welfare of mankind nearest his heart, will indeed probably blame us as too conservative, —as lacking in robust and wholesome aggressiveness. And he will perhaps find fault with us for respecting prejudices which he thinks ought to be shocked. Our reply must be, that it is not by wounding prejudices that the cause of truth is most efficiently served. Men do not give up their false or inadequate beliefs by hearing them scoffed at or harshly criticized: they give them up only when they have

been taught truths with which the false or inadequate beliefs are incompatible. The object of the scientific philosopher, therefore, will be to organize science and extend the boundaries of knowledge.

If he obtains a fresh morsel of truth, he will proclaim it to the world without dread of consequences, and let it bide its time until society comes, of its own free-will and intelligence, to accept it. But while feeling it unnecessary, and often unadvisable, to urge his views upon others, no craven fear of obloquy will prevail upon him to conceal them when it is desirable that they should be stated. He will state them without mental reservation, and, above all, without fear of any possible harm that can come from the unhampered quest of truth. There is nothing more reprehensible than the secret dread of ugly consequences with which so many writers approach all questions of vital importance. They shrink from lifting the veil which envelopes the Isis-statue of Truth, lest instead of a beaming countenance they may perchance encounter a ghastly death's head. But philosophy should harbour neither fears nor repugnances, nor qualms of conscience. It is not for us, creatures of a day that we are, and seeing but a little way into a limited portion of nature, to say dictatorially, before patient examination, that we will not have this or that doctrine as part of our philosophic creed. We must feel our way as best we can, gather with unremitting toil what facts lie within our reach, and gratefully accept such conclusions as can honestly and by due process of inference and verification be obtained for our guidance. We are not the autocrats, but the servants and interpreters of Nature; and we must interpret her as she is,—not as we would like her to be. That harmony which we hope eventually to see established between our knowledge and our aspirations is not to be realized by the timidity which shrinks from logically following out either of two apparently conflicting lines of thought—as in the question

of matter and spirit—but by the fearlessness which pushes each to its inevitable conclusion. Only when this is recognized will the long and mistaken warfare between Science and Religion be exchanged for an intelligent and enduring alliance. Only then will the two knights of the fable finally throw down their weapons, on discovering that the causes for which they have so long been waging battle are in reality one and the same eternal cause,—the cause of truth, of goodness, and of beauty; "the glory of God, and the relief of man's estate."

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THE

METHODS OF ETHICS.

THE

METHODS OF ETHICS

BY

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Ἦ οὐ γελοῖον ἐπὶ μὲν ἄλλοις σμικροῦ ἀξίοις πᾶν ποιεῖν συντεινομένους, ὅπως ὅτι ἀκριβέστατα καὶ καθαρώτατα ἕξει, τῶν δὲ μεγίστων μὴ μεγίστας ἀξιοῦν εἶναι καὶ τὰς ἀκριβείας;—PLATO.

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PREFACE.

In offering to the public a new book upon a subject so trite as Ethics, it seems desirable to indicate clearly at the outset its plan and purpose. Its distinctive characteristics may be first given negatively. It is not, in the main, metaphysical or psychological: at the same time it is not dogmatic or directly practical; it does not deal, except by way of illustration, with the history of ethical thought: in a sense it might be said to be not even critical, since it is only quite incidentally that it offers any criticism of the systems of individual moralists. It claims to be an examination, at once expository and critical, of the different methods of obtaining reasoned convictions as to what ought to be done which are to be found—either explicit or implicit—in the moral consciousness of mankind generally: and which, from time to time, have been developed, either singly or in combination, by individual thinkers, and worked up into the systems now historical.

I have avoided the inquiry into the Origin of the Moral Faculty—which has perhaps occupied a disproportionate amount of the attention of modern moralists—by the simple assumption (which seems to be made implicitly in all ethical reasoning) that there is something under any given circumstances which it is right or reasonable to do, and that this may be known. If it be admitted that we now have the faculty of knowing this, it appears to me that the investigation of the historical antecedents of this cognition, and of its relation to other elements of the mind, no more properly belong to Ethics than the corresponding questions as to the cognition of Space belong to Geometry. I make, however, no further assumption as to the nature of the object of ethical knowledge: and hence my treatise is not dogmatic: all the different methods developed in it are expounded and criticised from a neutral position, and as impartially as possible. And thus, though my treatment of the subject is, in a sense, more practical than that of many moralists, since I am occupied from first to last in considering how conclusions are to be rationally reached in the familiar matter of our common daily life and actual practice; still, my immediate object,—to invert Aristotle's phrase—is not Practice but Knowledge. I have thought that the predominance in the minds of moralists of a desire to edify has impeded the real progress of ethical science: and that this would be benefited by an application to it of the same disinterested curiosity to which we chiefly owe the great

discoveries of physics. It is in this spirit that I have endeavoured to compose the present work: and with this view I have desired to concentrate the reader's attention, from first to last, not on the practical results to which our methods lead, but on the methods themselves. I have wished to put aside temporarily the urgent need which we all feel of finding and adopting the true method of determining what we ought to do; and to consider simply what conclusions will be rationally reached if we start with certain ethical premises, and with what degree of certainty and precision.

I ought to mention that Chapter IV. of Book I. has been reprinted (with considerable modifications) from the *Contemporary Review*, in which it originally appeared as an article on "Pleasure and Desire." And I cannot conclude without a tribute of thanks to my friend Mr Venn, to whose kindness in accepting the somewhat laborious task of reading and criticising my work, both before and during its passage through the press, I am indebted for several improvements in my exposition.

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THE METHODS OF ETHICS.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

§ 1. ETHICS may be defined as the Science of Practice or Conduct: the latter term is preferable, as Practical Science is more conveniently used to include along with Ethics the cognate studies of Jurisprudence[1] and Politics.

All three alike are distinguished from speculative[2] sciences by the characteristic that they attempt to determine not the actual but the ideal: what ought to exist, not what does exist.

An objection is sometimes taken to the application of the term "Science" to such studies as these. It is said that a Science must necessarily have some department of actual existence for its subject-matter: and there is no doubt that the term "Moral Sciences" is frequently—perhaps more frequently—used to denote studies that deal with the actually existent: viz. Psychology, or a portion of it; what Mr Mill calls Ethology, or the inquiry into the laws of the formation of character; and Sociology, or (as it has been also termed) the Physiology of Society.

[1] I use this term in its older and wider signification, to denote a science or study that deals with the *matter* as well as the *form* of Law.

[2] There is no term that will exactly express the distinction needed, without some limitation of its usage. We commonly speak of Ethical speculations. But some term is required, and "speculative" seems to me on the whole the best. "Positive" I should have chosen, if it were not too much identified with a special system.

It is the object of such studies to classify and explain the actual phenomena, exhibited either by individual human beings considered separately, or by the larger organizations of which they are elements. At the same time, comparatively few persons pursue these studies from pure curiosity, in order merely to ascertain what actually exists. Most men wish not only to understand human action, but also to regulate it; and indeed almost all writers on man and society introduce at least incidentally practical suggestions, and criticisms passed from a practical point of view. They apply the ideas "good" and "bad," "right" and "wrong," to the conduct or institutions which they describe; and thus pass, sometimes half unconsciously, from the point of view of Psychology or Sociology to the point of view of Ethics or Politics. It is true that the mutual implication of the two kinds of study is, on any theory, very close and complete. Our view of what ought to be is derived, at least in all details, from our apprehension of what is: and the means of realizing our ideal can only be thoroughly learnt by a careful study of actual phenomena. But the determination of the first principles of practice, of the End or Ideal itself at which we are to aim, seems necessarily to lie outside of all investigation of the actual. It is the systematic determination of such End or Ideal which forms the essentially distinct portion of all branches of Practical Philosophy, and most prominently of Ethics proper: and it is merely a verbal question whether we shall apply the name "science" to such systematic studies: though it is, of course, important that we should not confound them with the purely speculative studies to which they bear respectively so close a relation.

§ 2. There are two essentially distinct forms of putting the fundamental question of Ethics, the difference between which, as we shall presently see, leads to important consequences: and goes deeper (at any rate when the science is considered in its formal aspect) than any differences among the answers given to either question. Ethics may either be regarded as an inquiry into the nature of the Good, the intrinsically preferable and desirable, the true end of action, &c.: or as an investigation of the Right, the true rules of conduct, Duty, the Moral Law, &c. The former view predominated in the Greek schools, at any rate

until the later developments of Stoicism: the latter has been more prominent in English Philosophy since Hobbes, in an age of active jural speculation and debate, raised the deepest views of morality in a jural form. Either view can easily be made to comprehend the other: but the second seems to have the widest application. For the good that Ethics is understood to investigate is limited to practicable good, as Aristotle says: that is, good that can be obtained by the voluntary action of human beings. Now this end might conceivably be that to which all human action is actually directed: and indeed the school of moralists which regards Pleasure as the Good, maintains that this is in a certain sense the case; but not in a practical sense, as no one maintains that the actions of all men are such as a scientific Hedonist would approve. Even in the view of pure Epicureanism, action aimed at the true end, directed towards the attainment of that which is truly good, is an ideal to which actual human conduct only approximates. The science of Ethics, therefore, necessarily treats of action which to a great extent *is* not: action therefore which (we may say) *ought* to be. Its affirmations are also precepts: indeed, if it were not so, the distinction just drawn between Ethics and Psychology would vanish.

On the other hand, the first view of Ethics is not naturally applicable to those systems which consider rightness of conduct to consist in conformity to absolute rules, or (as Kant calls them) "Categorical Imperatives." It is true that here we may say with Aristotle that the end is the action itself, or a certain quality of it (conformity to a Rule), and not something outside of and consequent on the action: but in common language, when we speak of acting for an end, we mean something different from the action itself, some consequence of it. Again, while most moralists hold that right action is always (whether through natural laws or supernatural appointment) followed by consequences in themselve desirable, which may be regarded as in a certain sense the end of the action: still many of the school called Intuitivist or Intuitional hold that our obligation to obey moral rules is not conditional on our knowledge of the end and of its connexion with the actions prescribed. The end, they say, is a Divine end, and not to be scrutinized by men: the rules are

for us absolute. And this is probably the commonest conception of morality (as expressed in propositions): that it is a system of absolute rules, prescribed by God through conscience for obeying which no reason is to be asked or given, except that they are so prescribed.

Hence it seems best not to assume at the outset that Ethics investigates an end at all, but rather to define it as the study of what ought to be done: or, more precisely, of what ought to be as far as it depends upon the voluntary action of individuals. For it may be said that the marriage-law ought to be altered or a Republic introduced: but it cannot be said that I ought to alter or introduce, as I cannot do so without the cooperation of others. What *I* ought to do must be something that I can do. It may be objected that we commonly apply the notions of "right" and "wrong" not only to the voluntary actions of individuals, but also to their motives and dispositions. But I conceive it is only in so far as these are thought to be at least indirectly within the control of the will, that they become the objects of strictly ethical judgments.

§ 3. We must observe, however, that an entirely different view is sometimes taken of the scope of Ethics. It is said, as for example by Dugald Stewart, that the inquiry into the Theory of Morals—which Stewart distinguishes in a manner which seems to me essentially popular and unphilosophical from the inquiry into Practical Doctrines—may be subdivided into two inquiries: (1) into the "nature of the moral faculty" and (2) into the "proper object of moral approbation": and it is in fact upon the former that Stewart and others expend the greater part of their energy. The second corresponds to the province of Ethics as just defined. The "proper object of moral approbation"=what those who think rightly think ought to be done: which is only a roundabout way of describing what ought to be done, as everything obviously *is* what it is rightly thought to be.

Now it is evident that the first inquiry, 'By what faculty we know what ought to be done,' is quite distinct from the second. Every one is interested in the latter: it is of immediate practical importance. But if we were only agreed as to what we ought to do, the question, 'How we come to know it,'

would be one of quite subordinate interest, which most persons would be content to leave unstudied.

So in the case of geometry, many persons are anxious to understand the necessary or universal relations of things existing in space; while the question 'How we come to know these relations' interests comparatively few: and is not regarded as belonging to the science of geometry, but to Psychology, Logic or Metaphysics. In the same way the question 'What ought to be done' would naturally seem the fundamental question of Ethics proper: while the question 'How we come to know what ought to be done,' would naturally form a part of the general inquiry into the nature of knowledge and our faculties for knowing.

At the same time the parallel between Ethics and Geometry is not very close. In Geometry there is complete agreement as to Method of reasoning: and only slight difference of opinion as to the premises which may be legitimately assumed. If there were several competing methods of geometry, proceeding on diverse principles, differing to some extent in their conclusions and far more in their premises, geometers would inevitably be involved at the outset of their study in methodological discussion. And disagreement as to the right method of reasoning in Ethics naturally leads to an inquiry into the manner in which men actually do reason, and so into the nature and working of the moral faculty. In this way we find again a new point of contact between Ethics proper and Ethical psychology, and a new distinction requisite. We have not only to distinguish between what men ought to do, and what they actually do: but also between what men, taken individually, nationally, historically, think to be their duty, and what really is such.

The distinction last drawn is sometimes denied. It is said that "what ought to be, has no *objective existence*." In one sense this is of course true. What ought to be, as such, does not exist at all. It *is* not, it *ought to be*. But if science of it be possible it must in another sense have objective existence: it must be an object of knowledge and as such the same for all minds. Even this however is not always admitted. "What ought to be done" (it is said) "is merely what *we* should like

to be done, or, more precisely, what excites in us a specific feeling called approbation, varying in its object from mind to mind. A psychological account of it is therefore the only true one. Ethical science can do no more than describe the different ways of feeling and judging about actions which experience shows us to exist, classify them, and attempt to discover the laws of their growth and development."

This is sometimes called the Doctrine of the Relativity of Morals: but the term "relative," here as in metaphysics, is ambiguous, and its different meanings need to be carefully discriminated. One may hold that duty varies with the individual and is so far relative, and yet maintain that it varies on rational grounds, capable of being explained, systematized, and reduced to principles. So much relativity, indeed, is admitted to some extent in all moral systems. But if it be maintained that two men may act in two different ways under circumstances precisely similar, and yet neither be wrong because each thinks himself right: then the common notion of morality must be rejected as a chimera. That there is in any given circumstances some one thing which ought to be done and that this can be known, is a fundamental assumption, made not by philosophers only, but by all men who perform any processes of moral reasoning: indeed scientific Ethics can be only the organization and systematic elaboration of principles and methods implied in the moral reasoning of common men.

I do not say that every man, or the same man at all times, adopts the same principles and method in his moral reasoning. On the contrary, I think that moralists have erred importantly in not seeing and admitting that men, in so far as they reason on morals and attempt to make their practice rational, do so, naturally and normally, upon different principles and by different methods: that there are, in short, several Natural Methods of Ethics.

It is true—indeed it follows from what has been just said—that it is a postulate of the science that either these methods must be reconciled and harmonized, or all but one of them rejected. The common sense of men cannot acquiesce in conflicting principles: so there can be but one rational method of Ethics (in the widest sense of the word method). But in setting

out to inquire what this is, we ought to recognize the fact that there are many natural methods.

§ 4. The question, what these methods are, may be conveniently answered by noticing another sense in which "ought" is said to be a relative term: relative, it is now meant, to some end in view which has to be presupposed. If we take the end as our end, the ultimate effect which we wish to realize by all our action or a part of it: and if we ascertain that certain courses of action are necessary to its realization: our reason makes these courses of action imperative on us: it is evidently irrational to choose the end, and not to choose the indispensable means. But such precepts are merely, what Kant calls them, Hypothetical Imperatives; they are not addressed to any one who has not first accepted the end.

Now there is no doubt that the word "ought" is frequently used in this way: and moreover that it is often so used when the end is tacitly supposed, not expressed. A teacher of any art assumes that his pupil wants to produce the product of the art, or to produce it excellent in quality: he tells him that he *ought* to hold the awl, the hammer, the brush differently. A physician assumes that his patient wants health: he tells him that he ought to rise early, to live plainly, to take hard exercise. If the patient replies that he prefers ease and good living to health, the physician's precepts fall to the ground: they are no longer addressed to him. A man of the world assumes that his hearers wish to get on in society, when he lays down rules of dress, manner, conversation, habits of life. In the same way many rules that are commonly regarded as rules of morality: many, for example, that form part of the proverbial code of precepts handed down in an early stage of civilization: may be plausibly viewed as merely Counsels of Prudence (to use a Kantian term again). They are given on the assumption that a man desires Happiness: if any one should be so exceptional as not to desire it, they are simply not addressed to him: and so the "ought" in such formulæ is still implicitly relative to an optional end.

It seems, however, that this account of the matter is not exhaustive. We do not all look with simple indifference on a man who declines to take the right means to attain his own

happiness, on no other ground than that he does not care about happiness. Most of us would regard such a refusal as irrational, with a certain disapprobation: would think, in other words, that he *ought* to seek his own happiness. The word "ought" thus used is no longer relative: happiness now appears as an end *absolutely* prescribed by reason.

So, again, many Utilitarians hold all the rules of conduct which men prescribe to one another *as moral rules*, to be partly consciously and partly unconsciously prescribed as means to the end of the happiness of the community. But here again it is very commonly held that while the rules are relative, the end is absolutely prescribed. It is held that we *ought* to seek the happiness of the community. In the case of men's own happiness it may be said with a semblance of truth that as they naturally do seek it, and cannot help seeking it, the idea of "ought" is inapplicable: but in the case of the general happiness, no one has ever urged that it is natural to all men to aim at it: it is obvious that they do not, or do not adequately.

We might of course inquire into the means of attaining individual or general happiness, without deciding whether the end to be attained be optional or prescribed by Reason to all mankind: in this case the study might be called (as has been proposed) *Eudemonics:* but as it would not claim to determine the absolute rightness and wrongness of actions, it would not be properly an Ethical inquiry (in the sense in which Ethics is here understood). It would however be convertible into Ethics, by the acceptance of the end as absolutely prescribed.

We see then that there will be as many different methods of Ethics, as there are different views of the ends which men ought to seek. Now if all the ends which men actually do seek, subordinating everything else to the attainment of them (under the influence of "ruling passions"), laid claim to be absolute ends, the task of the ethical student would be hopelessly complex and extensive. But this is not the case: we do not find that men regard most of the objects which they seek, even with persistency and vehemence, as morally prescribed. Many men sacrifice health, fortune, happiness to Fame: but no one has deliberately maintained that Fame is an object which men

ought to seek, except as a means to something else, either as the best stimulus to the attainment of Excellence, or because its pursuit affords, on the whole, the keenest Happiness. Whether there are any ends besides these two, which Reason regards as ultimate: or (to put it otherwise) whether any other objects are properly included under the notion of "intrinsically good" or "desirable": it will hereafter be an important part of our business to investigate. But we may perhaps say that *primâ facie* the only two ends which clearly claim to be, as some would say, *rational ends*, or ends absolutely prescribed, are the two just mentioned, Perfection or Excellence and Happiness. And we must observe that on either of these ends two quite distinct methods may be based, according as either is sought to be realized universally, or by each individual for himself alone.

There is, however, another view of Ethics, mentioned above, which dropping into the background the notion of an *end*, takes as First Principles of practice certain *rules* absolutely prescribed. Such a system would seem to be generally meant when we speak of an Independent or of an Intuitive system of Ethics: and morality in the view of Butler, and of the Common Sense School generally, is conceived in this manner.

We have then Five Methods to distinguish, which, however, by no means require equal attention. In the first place, no systematic moralist has seriously taken universal Perfection (as distinct from Happiness) as the ultimate end to which all moral rules should be explicitly referred. Again the method which seeks the individual's perfection as ultimate end is closely akin to that which aims at conformity to certain absolute rules: virtue being the most prominent element in our notion of human perfection. It will therefore be convenient to treat these together as two varieties of what we may call Intuitionism. There remain the two systems which make Happiness an ultimate end. Both of these are frequently called Utilitarianism. We may distinguish them as Egoistic and Universalistic Hedonism: as it is the latter of these, as taught by Bentham and his successors, that has become famous as Utilitarianism, I shall always restrict that term to this signification. For Egoistic Hedonism it is somewhat hard to find a single perfectly appro-

priate term. I shall often call this simply Egoism: but it may sometimes be convenient to call it Epicureanism: for though this name more properly denotes a particular historical system it has come to be commonly used in the wider sense in which I wish to employ it.

§ 5. The last sentence suggests one more explanation, which, for clearness' sake, it seems desirable to make: an explanation, however, rather of the plan and purpose of the present treatise, than of the nature and boundaries of the subject of Ethics, as generally understood.

There are several recognised ways of treating this subject, none of which I have thought it desirable to adopt. We may start with existing systems, and either study them historically, tracing the changes in thought through the centuries, or compare and classify them according to relations of resemblance, or criticize their internal coherence. Or we may seek to add to the number of these systems: and claim after so many unsuccessful efforts to have at last attained the one true theory of the subject, by which all others may be tested. The present book contains neither the exposition of a system nor a natural or critical history of systems. I have attempted to define and unfold not one Method of Ethics, but several: at the same time these are not here studied historically, as methods that have actually been used or proposed for the regulation of practice: but rather as alternatives between which the human mind seems to me necessarily forced to choose, when it attempts to frame a complete synthesis of practical maxims and to act in a perfectly rational manner. Thus though I have called them natural methods, they might more properly be called natural methods rationalized; because it is perhaps most natural to men to guide themselves by a mixture of different methods, more or less disguised under ambiguities of language. The impulses from which the different methods take their rise exist to some extent in all men; and the different claims of different ends to be rational each man finds urged and admitted by his own mind in different states and attitudes. And as along with these claims is felt the need of harmonizing them —since it is, as was said, a postulate of the Practical Reason, that two conflicting rules of action cannot both be reasonable—

the result is ordinarily either a confused blending, or a forced and premature reconciliation, of different principles and methods. Nor have the systems framed by professed moralists been free from similar defects. The writers have proceeded to synthesis without adequate analysis; the practical demand for the former being much more urgently felt than the theoretical need of the latter. For in this and other points the development of the theory of ethics has been much impeded by the preponderance of practical considerations. Although Aristotle has said that "the end of our study is not knowledge, but conduct," it is still true that the peculiar excellence of his own system is due to the pure air of scientific curiosity in which it has been developed. And it would seem that a more complete detachment of the scientific study of right conduct from its practical application is to be desired for the sake even of the latter itself. A treatment which is a compound between the scientific and the hortatory seems to miss both the results that it would combine: the mixture is bewildering to the brain and not stimulating to the heart. Again, in other sciences, the more distinctly we draw the line between the known and the unknown, the more rapidly the science progresses: for the clear indication of an unsolved problem is an important step to its solution. But in ethical treatises there has been a continual tendency to ignore and keep out of sight the difficulties of the subject; either unconsciously, from a latent conviction that the questions which the writer cannot answer satisfactorily must be questions which ought not to be asked; or consciously, that he may not shake the sway of morality over the minds of his readers. This last amiable precaution frequently defeats itself: the difficulties thus concealed in exposition are liable to reappear in controversy; and then they appear not carefully limited, but magnified for polemical purposes. Thus we get on the one hand vague and hazy reconciliation, on the other loose and random exaggeration of discrepancies: and neither process is effective to dispel the original vagueness and ambiguity which lurks in the fundamental notions of our common practical reasonings. The mists which the dawn of philosophical reflection in Socrates struggled to dispel still hang about the methods of the most highly reputed moralists. To eliminate this indefiniteness

and confusion is the sole immediate end that I have proposed to myself in the present work. In order better to execute this task, I have refrained from making any attempt at such a final solution of the chief ethical difficulties and controversies as would convert this exposition of various methods into the development of a harmonious system. At the same time I am not without hope of affording aid towards the construction of such a system; because it seems easier to judge of the conflicting claims of different modes of thought, after an impartial and rigorous investigation of the conclusions to which they logically lead. A humourist once said that he would not admit that two and two made four until he knew what use would be made of the statement; and the paradox is subtle and suggestive: since it is not uncommon to find in reflecting on practical principles, that however unhesitatingly they seem to command our assent at first sight, and however familiar and apparently clear the notions of which they are composed, nevertheless when we have carefully examined the consequences of adopting them they wear a changed and somewhat dubious aspect. The truth seems to be that all moral principles that have ever been put forward are more or less satisfactory to the common sense of mankind, so long as they have the field to themselves. They all find a response in our nature: their fundamental assumptions are all such as we are disposed to accept, and such as we find, to govern to a certain extent our habitual conduct. When I am asked, "Are you not continually seeking pleasure and avoiding pain?" "Have you not a moral sense?" "Do you not intuitively pronounce some actions to be right and others wrong?" "Do you not acknowledge the general happiness to be a paramount end?" I answer yes to all questions. My difficulty begins when I have to choose between the different principles. We admit the necessity, when they conflict, of making this choice, and that it is irrational to let sometimes one principle prevail and sometimes another; but the necessity is a painful one. We cannot but hope that all methods may ultimately coincide: and at any rate before making our election we may reasonably wish to have the completest possible knowledge of each.

And here one may perhaps express a certain dissatisfaction

with moralists of all schools; not for the conclusions to which they have come, but for the slight trouble that they seem to have taken in coming to these conclusions. The modern Epicurean reasons closely and scientifically when he tries to persuade us that it is useless to aim at anything but pleasure: but when we are persuaded, at any rate so far as to be strongly interested in learning his theory of pleasure and its conditions, we are disappointed to find his treatment become suddenly loose and popular. The Intuitionist spends unnecessary words in convincing us that we have moral intuitions; but when we ask him, "What then are the rules that we intuitively know?" his answers seem almost wilfully vague. What Descartes writes of the older books which his teachers set before him, may be applied to most orthodox treatises on Ethics: "Ils élèvent fort haut la vertu, mais ils n'enseignent pas assez à la connaître."

My object, then, in the present work, is to expound as clearly and as fully as my limits will allow, the different methods of Ethics that I find implicit in our common moral reasoning; to point out their mutual relations; and where they seem to conflict, to define the issue as much as possible. I have wished to keep the reader's attention throughout directed to the processes rather than the results of ethical thought: and have therefore never stated as my own any positive practical conclusions unless by way of illustration: and have never ventured to decide dogmatically any controverted points, except where the controversy seemed to arise from want of precision or clearness in the definition of principles, or want of coherence in reasoning.

CHAPTER II.

MORALITY AND LAW.

§ 1. In the last chapter I have spoken of Ethics, Jurisprudence and Politics as branches of Practical Philosophy, including in the scope of their investigation somewhat that lies outside the sphere of positive sciences: viz. the determination of ends to be sought, or absolute rules to be obeyed. Before proceeding further, it would naturally seem desirable to determine in outline the limits and mutual relations of these different studies. At the same time it is difficult to do this satisfactorily at the outset of our enquiry: because generally according as we adopt one method of ethics or another we shall adopt different views as to these limits and relations. For example, a Utilitarian is likely to think that the legal and political relations of the members of the community ought to be primarily determined, as the most important: and to treat Morality in the second place, as accessory and auxiliary to Law. While one who regards the common rules of morality as possessing an absolute and independent validity, is likely to extend their sway over Law and Politics. For if Justice is something that can be ascertained and sought apart from utility, it would naturally be thought that Law ought to realize such justice: and some again hold that Law aims at fostering other virtues in special departments, such as purity in the laws relating to marriage: and some would say that the State ought to aim at making its members good men, and therefore ought to establish and endow one or more religious bodies. There is a similar difficulty in determining the relation between Jurisprudence and Politics: or, more precisely, between the principles of Civil

and those of Constitutional and International Law. This is not indeed so difficult when we are dealing with details: we may say, for example, that the precepts of Constitutional Jurisprudence (whether abstract or historical) regulate the conduct of certain members of the society, to whom governmental functions are entrusted, and their mutual relations, and their relations to the rest of the community, (including the mode of their appointment): while Civil Jurisprudence includes all other rules enforced by Law Courts. But when we refer these rules to first principles, the relation of the two sciences becomes matter of much dispute: as a pure utilitarian holds that the two sets of rules are not so much systematically connected as coordinately established by a reference to universal utility in each case: while other political theorists consider that the rights of government are derived from a surrender of natural rights on the part of the individuals composing the community, and so that the principles of Civil Jurisprudence are logically prior to those of Politics. Formerly this surrender or "social compact" was regarded as historical, and much antiquarian labour expended in discussing the nature of a historical event fraught with so momentous consequences: but now it is understood to be a merely ideal conception, prescribing how the rights of government ought to be considered and judged, however they may have originated. And this latter view would seem to have been adopted implicitly to a greater extent than it has been explicitly: for upon some such conception depends the widely received principle of the intrinsic illegitimacy of despotism, and of all governments where taxes are imposed and laws made without the consent of a Representative body. For it is held that a man has a natural right to his property (some say to the produce of his labour, others to what he has acquired by First occupation and voluntary transfer) and to freedom of action: and that he cannot be rightly deprived of either except by his consent given through his representatives. This theory, however, is not free from difficulties: for besides that the definition of Natural Rights is much disputed, it is not clear that the consent of the majority of persons whom a man has helped to choose is the same thing as his own consent.

These questions, however, we cannot now adequately consider. But regarding Morality, as we may on any method regard it, as a system of rules for the guidance of conduct, we may at any rate distinguish it from Law by saying that Law consists of such rules as it is right to enforce by a definitely organized infliction of punishments, and Morality of all other rules that ought to be observed. And in so far as moral rules are accepted by universal consent, and parts of what I shall call the Morality of common sense, we may pursue the analogy with Law further: for such rules also have a penalty[1], attached to their violation, though not a definite one, viz. the disapprobation of mankind and its consequences in indisposition to render services, &c.

However we cannot thus exclude Jurisprudence and Politics from the sphere of Morality. For it is a moral duty to observe laws, always or ordinarily, even when the penalty might be evaded: and the disposition to do this is recognised by some moralists as a principal virtue, and called the virtue of Order. And every one in a free state has duties as a citizen besides mere obedience, which are determined entirely or to some extent by the constitution of the state: and perhaps (if we may assume that no one ought to acquiesce in a perfectly despotic government) every one in any state has such political duties, either those allotted to him by the constitution, or at any rate the general duty of making the constitution and the laws as good as possible. But further, all are agreed that the moral duties of a member of any community must depend to some extent upon the actual state of its laws, and again, that in laying down Law we must have regard to current morality: but it is disputed how far this mutual implication extends. We have already seen that the relation of Ideal Law (as determined on theoretical principles) to Morality, will be decided differently

[1] It is this penalty that Bentham called the "moral" sanction: as being the only *external* influence tending to secure the observance of Morality proper as distinct from Law. But the term is not a happy one, as it seems to imply that the whole of Morality is supported by such a sanction: whereas scarcely any one holds that the rules imposed by universal consent exactly coincide with the whole law of Duty at any time: and least of all does a utilitarian hold this, as he thinks that they ought to be revised in accordance with calculations of utility.

by different ethical schools: but besides this we have to consider how Morality is related to positive Law where that diverges from the ideal, and is not judged to be the best or right law. It is universally recognised as a duty to conform to even bad laws, generally speaking, so long as they exist. But nearly all except Hobbes are agreed that some such laws ought to be disobeyed: as (e. g.) that which bids us worship false gods. Again, though no one would maintain that all that is allowed by law is morally allowable: yet to some extent moral duty is thought to vary with positive law, even outside the sphere of strict law-observance. Thus positive Law seems to give to some extent the skeleton or frame-work, which Morality clothes or fills in. How far this is the case is however disputed: and the dispute cannot be settled without much discussion: so that at present we can only indicate vaguely and roughly the boundary of Morality on the side of Law.

§ 2. There is, however, another view which regards Ethics as dependent on Politics in quite a different manner: viz. as being an investigation not of what ought to be done here and now, but of what ought to be the rules of behaviour in an ideal society. So that the subject-matter of our science would be doubly ideal: as it would not only prescribe what ought to be done as distinct from what is, but what ought to be done in a society that itself *is* not, but only *ought* to be.

As this view involves a complete change in the statement of the fundamental problem of our science, and not merely a different method of solution, it must be carefully examined before we proceed further.

This is the view which Plato's metaphysic led him to take: and it has been more or less expressly held by Platonists in all ages. In our own times the theory has been stated most distinctly by Mr Herbert Spencer[1]. "Morality," says that thinker, "is a code of rules proper for the guidance of humanity in its highest conceivable perfection...right principles of action become practicable only as men become perfect." And the analogy of Geometry is adduced to shew that Ethics ought to deal with ideally perfect human relations, just as Geometry treats of ideally perfect lines and circles. But the

[1] *Social Statics*, Introduction, p. 4.

most irregular line has definite spatial relations with which Geometry does not refuse to deal: though of course they are more complex than those of a straight line. So in Astronomy, it would be more convenient for purposes of study if the stars moved in circles, as was once believed. But the fact that they move not in circles but in ellipses, and even in imperfect and perturbed ellipses, does not take them out of the sphere of scientific investigation: by patience and industry we have learnt how to reduce to principles and calculate even these more complicated motions. It is, no doubt, a convenient artifice for purposes of instruction to assume that the planets move in perfect ellipses (or even—at an earlier stage of study—in circles): we thus allow the individual's knowledge to pass through the same gradations in accuracy as that of the race has done. But what we want, as astronomers, to know is the actual motion of the stars and its causes: and similarly as moralists we naturally inquire what ought to be done in the actual world in which we live. It may be that neither in the former case nor in the latter can we hope to represent in our calculations the full complexity of the actual considerations: but we endeavour to approximate to it as closely as possible. It is only so that we really grapple with the question to which mankind have so long been demanding an answer: 'What is a man's duty in his present condition?' For it is too absurd to say that the whole duty of man is summed up in the attainment of a right state of social relations (though some travellers in Utopia seem to think so), and that we owe no duties to our contemporaries, but only to those who are to attain fruition of these ideal conditions. We must therefore determine our duties to the present world of men somehow: and Ethics seeks to do this in a systematic manner.

This inquiry into the morality of an ideal society can therefore be at best but a preliminary investigation, after which the step from the ideal to the actual, in accordance with reason, remains to be taken. We have to ask, then, how far such a preliminary construction seems desirable. And in answering this we must distinguish the different methods of Ethics. For it is generally held by Intuitionists that true morality prescribes absolutely what is in itself right, under all social conditions; at

least as far as determinate duties are concerned: as (e.g.) that "Truth should always be spoken" and "Justice be done, though the sky should fall." And so far there seems to be little ground for distinguishing, in our determination of duty, between the actual and an ideal state of society. For though some of the details of duty may vary with social institutions, perfect performance of duty is held to be in the power of man under all circumstances, though not actually attained by him.

It would seem more natural that those methods which propose an ultimate end, which at present we cannot perfectly attain, viz. Happiness (whether individual or universal), should develope this consideration of the ideal conditions under which the end could be more fully realized[1]. And I shall not at present deny that this task might usefully be included in an exhaustive investigation of the particulars of these methods. But it can easily be shewn that it is involved in serious difficulties.

For as in ordinary deliberation we have to consider what is best under certain conditions of human life, internal or external, so we must do this in contemplating the ideal state; since what is in itself best is simply the attainment of the end, that is, of the most pleasant consciousness conceivable, lasting without intermittence. And it is not this that we want to contemplate so much as some method of realizing it, pursued by human beings, existing under conditions not too remote from our own, so that we can at least endeavour to imitate them. And for this we must know how far our present circumstances are modifiable; which is a very difficult question, as the constructions which have actually been made of such ideal societies shew. For example, the *Republic* of Plato seems in many respects sufficiently divergent from the reality, and yet he contemplates war as a permanent unalterable fact, to be provided for in the ideal state, and indeed such provision seems the predominant principle of his construction; whereas the soberest modern Utopia would certainly include the suppression of war. Indeed the ideal will often seem to diverge in diametrically

[1] For brevity's sake I omit to consider the method which takes Perfection as an end: because this, as ordinarily understood, either coincides to a great extent with Virtue, or is a means to Happiness.

opposite directions from the actual, according to the line of imagined change which we happen to adopt, in our visionary flight from present evils. For example, permanent marriage-unions now cause some unhappiness, because conjugal affection is not always permanent; but they are thought to be necessary, partly to protect men and women from vagaries of passion pernicious to themselves, but chiefly in order to the better rearing of children. Now it may seem to some that in an ideal state of society we could trust more to parental affections, and require less to control the natural play of emotion between the sexes, and that "Free Love" is therefore the ideal; while others would maintain that permanence in conjugal affection is natural and normal, and that any exceptions to this rule must be supposed to disappear as we approximate to the ideal. Again, the happiness enjoyed in our actual society seems much diminished by the unequal distribution of the means of happiness, and the division of mankind into rich and poor. But we can conceive this evil removed in two quite different ways; either by an increased disposition on the part of the rich to redistribute their share, or by such social arrangements as would enable the poor to secure more for themselves. In the one case the ideal involves a great extension of almsgiving: in the other, its extinction.

In short, it seems that when we abandon the firm ground of actual society we have an illimitable cloudland surrounding us on all sides, in which we may construct any variety of pattern states; but no definite ideal to which the actual undeniably approximates, as the straight lines and circles of the actual physical world approximate to those of scientific geometry.

It may be said, however, that we can reduce this variety by studying the past history of mankind, as this will enable us to predict to some extent their future manner of existence. But even so it does not appear that we shall gain very much for our present purposes. For let us make the most favourable suppositions that we can, and such as soar even above the confidence of the most dogmatic of scientific historians. Let us assume that the process of human history is a progress of mankind towards ever greater happiness. Let us assume further

that we can not only fix certain limits within which the future social condition of mankind must lie, but even determine in detail the mutual relations of the different elements of the future community, so as to view in clear outline the rules of behaviour, by observing which they will attain the maximum of happiness. It still remains quite doubtful how far it would be desirable for us to imitate these rules under the circumstances in which we now live. For this foreknown social order is *ex hypothesi* only presented as a more advanced stage in our social progress, and not as a type or pattern which we ought to make a struggle to realize approximately at any earlier stage. How far it should be taken as such a pattern, is a question which would still have to be determined by considering the effects of our actions on the present life of mankind; and hence it does not appear that the construction of an ideal society can fitly be taken as the foundation of any system of Ethics[1].

[1] Some further consideration of this question will be found in a subsequent Chapter. Cf. Book IV. c. iv.

CHAPTER III.

MORAL REASON.

§ 1. In the first chapter I spoke of what ought to be done as being right and reasonable, that which Reason prescribes and urges us to do, either absolutely or as a means to an end apprehended as ultimately rational. This manner of speaking is employed by writers of different schools, and seems in accordance with the common view and language on this subject. For we commonly think that wrong conduct is essentially irrational, and can be shewn to be so by argument; and though we do not conceive that it is by reason alone that men are influenced to act rightly, we still hold that appeals to the reason are an essential part of all moral persuasion, and that part which concerns the moralist or moral philosopher as distinct from the preacher or moral rhetorician. On the other hand elaborate and serious objections have been made to this phraseology, which we must carefully examine. There seem to be two grounds of objection, which though closely connected may yet be distinguished: one relating to the cognitive function, and the other to the motive or volitional influence, of the Practical Reason. It is maintained, first, that it is not by the reason that we apprehend moral distinctions, but rather by virtue of some emotional susceptibility commonly called a Moral Sense; and, secondly, that the Reason cannot be a spring of action, as it must always be Feeling that stimulates the Will. Let us consider the two questions separately.

In discussing whether moral distinctions are perceived by the Reason, it is especially important to make clear the point at issue. As we know nothing of any faculty of the mind

except from its effects, and only assume different faculties to explain or express differences among the mental phenomena which we refer to them, we must always be prepared to state what characteristics in the feeling or cognition investigated such reference imports: thus only can we avoid the sterile logomachy of which there has been unhappily too much in the present controversy.

For in saying that the Reason apprehends moral distinctions, it would seem that no more is usually meant than that there is such a thing as moral truth and error; that two conflicting judgments as to what ought to be done cannot both be true and sound. Now if I were attempting to establish dogmatically a system of Ethics, it might be desirable to prove this at the outset. But as my object is rather to expound the different methods of moral reasoning, in the most consistent (and so far rational) form which it seems possible to give to each, with the view of ascertaining exactly their points of agreement and disagreement; it can hardly be necessary to prove a proposition that must necessarily be assumed by all who pass ethical judgments. Such an assumption is really as much made by Hobbes, who identifies Reason with Rational self-love, and by Bentham when he announces that the greatest happiness of the greatest number is "the only right and proper end of human action," and by Adam Smith when he declares that general rules (resulting from the complex action of sympathy) are "plainly intended to be the governing principles of human nature," as it is by an Intuitional moralist.

We have to ask, then, whether anything that conflicts with this is intended by those who prefer to say that moral distinctions are perceived by a Sense. Now no doubt by sense is sometimes meant a faculty not conversant with objective truth but only with the sensations—purely subjective phenomena—of the sentient being, which may vary from A to B without either being in error. But then such a faculty does not furnish us with what are here called moral, but rather with psychological distinctions: its exercise does not lead to the affirmations "that this and that action ought to be done," but rather that "this and that action excite in me such and such

specific emotions." In so far, however, as supremacy is attributed to these emotional impulses over others (as it is by Hutcheson, and the Moral Sense school generally), and it is affirmed that we *ought* to obey them, it is obvious that this affirmation cannot also be referred to a Sense, as above defined: and hence even this system seems to rest ultimately on an objective truth—apprehended, we may say, by the Reason. But in fact those who have spoken of a Moral Sense have not always meant to deny the objectivity of its apprehensions: any more than in speaking of the sense of beauty we commonly intend to imply that there is no objective standard of beauty: and even in the case of colours, sounds, and all the so-called secondary qualities of matter, apprehended by special senses, it can scarcely be said to be the common view that they may be apprehended differently by different persons without error. In this case the opposition between Sense and Reason would seem to vanish, as the perception, to whichever faculty attributed, is the same "that such and such actions are right and ought to be done:" except in so far as the term Sense implies that a specific emotion always attends this perception. But here again there hardly seems to be any ground for controversy. For no one would maintain that the moral apprehension is ever a purely intellectual state of consciousness, containing no emotional element. While, on the other hand, it could not be denied that the amount of emotion attending the recognition of duty varies very much from individual to individual, and with the different moods of the same individual: the essential fact of the moral judgment remaining the same.

It must be allowed, however, that the use of the term "reason" for the faculty that perceives and prescribes moral rules is liable to lead to some confusion, which it may be well to notice and dispel.

In the first place, just as we have had to distinguish the relative from the absolute use of "right," "ought," "duty," &c.; so correspondingly we must distinguish from the authoritative, "categorically imperative" function of the Practical Reason, another in which its operation is more subordinate, prescribing not the end of action but only the means to a given end. In this latter case the end is determined by desire or impulse of

some kind, which may or may not be itself rational. The intellect merely apprehends that this or that thing or action is causally connected with the end or object of desire. Desiring the end, we cannot but be impelled to employ the indispensable means for attaining it: and thus the intellectual apprehension furnishes, so to speak, the machinery by which the impulsive force of desire is directed upon certain objects or actions which would not otherwise have come within its range. Or, again, the desire may be a general one for a class of objects: and the intellect may direct it upon a particular object by demonstrating that this possesses the attributes of the class. Such demonstration may be very complicated and elaborate, requiring the highest exercises of the intellect: but still the desire itself is independent of the reason, so that we cannot say that the actions to which it prompts are rationally prescribed.

In these cases the reason seems to introduce consistency into our conduct: and we may say generally that one meaning of "irrational" as applied to conduct is "inconsistent." Looking closer we see that there are two grades of inconsistency, of which we may call the one negative and the other positive. Our impulses to action may be such as not to conflict, and yet not harmonized or systematized: or they may be actually opposed and conflicting. In the latter case our conduct is more obviously and violently irrational: as when (e.g.) desiring an end we decline to take the necessary means to its attainment, or if aiming generally at a kind of objects or results, we shew ourselves arbitrarily indifferent to a particular individual or instance. This kind of conflict, however, is only possible when impulses have reached a certain degree of comprehensiveness and generality: there would be no place for it if they were (as we commonly conceive the impulses of brutes to be) quite momentary and particular. Still conduct prompted by a series of such unconnected impulses we call irrational, as being absolutely unsystematized, and in that sense inconsistent. Every one who claims to act reasonably, acts by general rules or notions; and considers an impulse unreasonable, not only when it conflicts with these, but when it cannot be brought under some one of them, when no general grounds can be stated for it. But, again, general rules and maxims may in their turn be

found mutually inconsistent, in either sense: and here too conduct appears to us irrational, or at least imperfectly rational, not only if the maxims upon which it is professedly based conflict with and contradict one another, but also if they cannot be bound together and firmly concatenated by means of some one fundamental principle. For practical reason does not seem to be thoroughly realized until a perfect order, harmony, and unity of system is introduced into our actions. And certain methods of effecting this systematization were noticed in Chapter I.: being those that constitute the subject-matter of this treatise. But it must be observed that there are many ends besides those that claim to be rational ends, which may be, and by many men actually are, accepted as ultimate ends and governing principles of action: and in fact any end sufficiently comprehensive may fulfil the function of rendering conduct consistent and systematic, and so far rational. Thus a man may devote his life to the attainment of wealth or fame, or sensual pleasure, or to the gratification of any other ruling passion: and in so far as this gives unity to his conduct and renders it consistent, it seems to impart a certain kind of rationality. Such conduct satisfies, we may say, the formal requirements of the discursive reason. Still we should not call it thoroughly rational: for we commonly regard the ruling passions just mentioned as in themselves irrational. It seems, therefore, to belong to reason not merely to judge of the relation of means to ends, or of the consistency of maxims: but also to determine the ultimate ends and true first principles of action.

Such an intuitive operation of the practical reason seems, as was said, to be somewhere assumed in all moral systems: and it is with this that we are here especially concerned.

But there is another point in reference to the nature of moral dictates or apprehensions, upon which the use of the term Reason may seem tacitly to assume a decision; whereas it needs to be expressly raised and decided in the course of our investigations. We do not say, in physics, that individual facts are apprehended by the Reason: we consider this faculty to be conversant in its discursive operation with the relation of judgments or propositions: and the intuitive reason (which is here rather in question) we restrict to the apprehension of universal

truths, such as the axioms of logic and mathematics. Now, as I shall presently notice, it is not uncommonly held that the moral faculty judges primarily of individual cases, applying directly to these the general notion of Duty, and deciding intuitively what ought to be done by this person in these particular circumstances. On this view the moral apprehension is more analogous to Sense-Perception than to Rational Intuition (as commonly understood): and hence the term Moral Sense has been preferred by many, who did not mean to suggest thereby any scepticism as to the reality of moral (as distinct from psychological) truth. But it is so important to avoid this suggestion, that it seems better to use generally the term Reason: provided it be not supposed to mean anything more specific than 'a faculty which takes cognizance of objective truth.'

§ 2. I pass now to the second point on which controversy has been raised: the question whether the Reason is a spring of action. Now in so far as Reason is here contrasted with Sentiment or Emotion, this, like the former issue between Reason and Sense, may be partly compromised. As was said, no one is competent or really concerned to maintain that the apprehension of duty is a state of consciousness which occurs without any emotional element. Hence we need not ask whether a mere cognition can act upon the Will and prompt to action. It is enough if it be granted that there exists in all moral agents as such a permanent desire (varying, no doubt, very much in strength from time to time, and in different persons) to do what is right or reasonable because it is such: so that when our practical reason recognises any course of conduct as right, this desire immediately impels us with a certain force towards such conduct. This force is often very slight, and too frequently insufficient to make us act as we think right. The "power" of conscience—to use Butler's words—is lamentably inferior to its "authority." But experience justifies us in assuming that it has some power[1]. Indeed since, in the common view, a truly virtuous man is one who would do

[1] It can hardly be said that Intuitional Moralists generally have been disposed to overestimate the actual force of the practical reason. Certainly neither Clarke nor Kant have fallen into this error.

what he thought right as such, whether or not he had any other motive for doing it: it is surely paradoxical to assert that the impulse which in this ideal case is conceived to be permanently paramount is one which is nowhere to be found among men. If this were so, the inquiry into what is absolutely right and reasonable would be one of purely speculative interest. But probably few would maintain that it is of no practical importance whatever whether a man adopts one ethical principle or another: at any rate all who have spent any labour in the demonstration of any such principles seem to have held the opposite opinion.

We may assume then as generally admitted that the recognition of any action as reasonable is attended with a certain desire or impulse to do it: and that in this sense the Reason may be affirmed to be a spring of action.

It may perhaps be thought that the "Moral sentiments," on which one school of moralists lay stress as supplying the real impulsive force, are after all very different from this impulse to do what is reasonable. And no doubt by a Moral sentiment we commonly mean an impulse towards a special kind of right action to which we feel a strong attraction (or a strong aversion to its opposite), such as the sentiment of veracity, courage, purity, &c. But each such specialized sentiment in its normal state includes or is combined with the more general impulse to do right. We may see this clearly from considering the exceptional cases in which the two impulses are separated. Suppose that any one habitually influenced (e.g.) by the sentiment of veracity is convinced that under certain peculiar circumstances in which he finds himself, speaking truth is not right but wrong. The sentiment, no doubt, still remains: the person still feels a repugnance against violating the rule of veracity: but it remains as a feeling quite different in kind and degree from that which prompted him to truth-speaking as a department of virtuous action.

Again, some may think that the impulse to do what is right and that to do what is reasonable ought not to be identified as completely as I have identified them, although they may always coincide. I think, however, that this objection will probably arise from a confusion between the two functions of the

Practical Reason distinguished in the previous section. In its subordinate operation, in which it only prescribes actions hypothetically, the really impulsive force and that which fixes the end of action after deliberation is very commonly self-love: and hence by reasonable action is sometimes meant "action prescribed by rational self-love." But, as was said, this exercise of reason is different from that by which we affirm that self-love—or anything else—is the *right* principle of conduct: and it is in this function that we are now considering reason as practical and prompting to action. (In fact I have defined "reason" so that "reasonable" conduct must mean "right" or "what ought to be done.")

It must be allowed, however, that by "reasonable" impulse would naturally be understood what Butler and Hutcheson would call a "calm" or "cool" motive: whereas the impulse which urges us to duty has often a passionate and enthusiastic tinge. But in an inquiry that is strictly ethical and not psychological we are not primarily concerned with the quality of the emotion which attends the apprehension of duty: but rather with the direction of its volitional impulse. It may be observed however that the character of the feeling frequently depends on some other notion being inseparably connected with the notion of duty. For example, a religious person will not contemplate duty merely as duty, but also as being God's ordinance: and hence his impulse to do it will be tinged with religious feeling: and it is possible that this latter conception may altogether obscure the former. Still most reflective Theists would say that they do not conform to God's law as the dictate merely of Supreme Power, but also of Supreme Goodness: that is, because God's will is itself reasonable and right: and in this manner the purely moral impulse again emerges, distinct from, though in harmony with, the religious feeling. And similarly the utilitarian's impulse towards what is right and good, which for him is identified with the happiness of mankind or of sentient beings, will naturally be blended and identified with sympathetic and philanthropic feeling: although the desire to do one's duty is still in itself distinguishable from the desire to benefit one's fellow-creatures.

CHAPTER IV.

PLEASURE AND DESIRE.

§ 1. In the preceding chapter I have tried to shew that the psychological proposition, 'that all voluntary action is prompted by Feeling or Sentiment of some kind,' does not really conflict with the ethical assumption that Reason prompts us to a certain kind of action: we have only to suppose (what psychological observation seems to confirm) that all moral agents, as such, feel a certain desire to do what Reason dictates. It is thus of some practical importance to ascertain what Reason does dictate: which is the aim of all ethical discussion.

There is however an account of voluntary action, very commonly accepted at the present day, which appears to exclude the above-mentioned assumption altogether, and (at least when stated in its most extreme form) to settle summarily the fundamental question of Ethics. I mean the theory that the motives to voluntary action are always pleasures or pains in prospect. For on this view there seems no room for the impulse to do what is right and reasonable as such: and the ultimate end of action is fixed for us by nature and not dictated by Reason.

In examining this theory, we may conveniently take the statement of it which is given by its most distinguished recent expositor, J. S. Mill. He tells us (*Utilitarianism*, c. 4) not only that "desiring a thing and finding it pleasant, aversion to it and thinking of it as painful, are phenomena entirely inseparable, or rather two parts of the same phenomenon," but also, still more precisely, that "we desire a thing *in proportion* as the idea of it is pleasant." It is important to notice the italic-

ized words: as, if the statement thus exactly defined were true, the scope of ethical discussion would be much more limited than it is ordinarily thought to be. If in the case of any conflict of impulses all the conflicting desires and aversions are strictly proportioned to pleasures and pains in prospect, then the resultant impulse must always be directed towards what appears to be the individual's greatest happiness. On this view the notions "right" and "wrong" would seem to have no meaning except as applied to the intellectual state accompanying volition: since if future pleasures and pains be truly represented, the desire must be directed towards its proper object. And thus the only possible method of Ethics would seem to be some form of Egoistic Hedonism. It will be said, perhaps, that I might still regard the Right or Reasonable course of conduct as different from that which tends to my own greatest happiness: and such a view may be conceivable as a psychological phenomenon: but no one would maintain it to be a reasonable view. I cannot rationally think that one end of action has been definitely determined for me by unvarying psychological laws, and another conflicting end prescribed for me by Reason. If my own greatest happiness—or what I think such—is what I cannot help aiming at, it cannot be true that I ought to aim at something else.

But it is surely manifest, without referring to the disputed cases of Virtuous or Self-sacrificing conduct, that there can be no such definite proportion maintained between strength of desire (or aversion) and intensity of foreseen pleasure (or pain): at least in any sense in which it would much concern the student of Ethics. For it is a matter of common experience that the resultant or prevailing desire in men is often directed towards what (even in the moment of yielding to the desire) they think likely to cause them more pain than pleasure on the whole. "Video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor" is as applicable to the Epicurean as it is to any one else. If any evidence is needed of this, I cannot do better than quote Mill himself. He tells us[1] that men often, not from merely intellectual deficiencies but from "infirmity of character, make their election for the nearer good, though they know it to be less valuable: and this

[1] *Utilitarianism*, c. 2, p. 14.

no less when the choice is between two bodily pleasures..... they pursue sensual indulgences to the injury of health, though perfectly aware that health is the greater good."

It may be said, however, that in this and other cases the prevailing desire is always directed towards some pleasure or other, though it may not be the greatest pleasure within our reach or even what we think such: and that thus, though the strict proportionality between pleasure and desire must be abandoned, it still remains true that the object of desire is always pleasure and nothing else.

Now it should be observed that this more indefinite psychological generalization is *primâ facie* compatible with any of the different methods of Ethics. For it admits the notion of Duty or Reasonable or Virtuous action, as determined on other grounds than by reference to its pleasurable or painful consequences to the individual agent: since the performance of duty, however determined, will equally be attended by the special pleasure of the "moral sense," and this pleasure may be preferred to all others, and chosen in spite of all concomitant pains. Indeed, as Aristotle says, our idea of a virtuous man includes the characteristic that he takes pleasure in doing virtuous actions: and it does not at first sight seem very important whether we say that he does his duty because he recognises it as duty, or because he finds a moral pleasure in doing it.

On reflection, however, I think it will appear that we have a natural tendency to pass from the psychological generalization that Pleasure is the Desired, to the ethical principle that Maximum Pleasure is for each the Most Desirable, or Summum Bonum. If we once admit that our actual motives are always pleasures and pains of some kind, it seems rational to compare these with each other in respect of their pleasantness or painfulness, and to choose the greatest pleasure or least pain on the whole: though perhaps the transition from the one view to the other cannot be thrown into the form of a cogent inference. And further, it must, I think, be admitted that if I do an act from the sole desire of obtaining the glow of moral self-complacency which I believe will attend its performance, my act does not really correspond to the common notion of virtuous

conduct, however complete may be its external conformity to the rule of virtue.

It seems therefore important to subject this generalization, even in its more indefinite form, to a rigorous examination.

§ 2. It will be well to begin by defining more precisely the point at issue. In the passage which I first quoted, Mill goes on to say that "desiring a thing, and finding it pleasant, are, in the strictness of language, two modes of naming the same psychological fact." If this be the case, it is hard to see how the assertion we are discussing requires to be determined by "practised self-consciousness and self-observation;" as the denial of it would involve a contradiction in terms. The truth is that there is an ambiguity in the word Pleasure, which has always tended seriously to confuse the discussion of this question[1]. By Pleasure we commonly mean an agreeable sensation not necessarily connected with desire or volition, as it may arise from external causes without having been foreseen or desired at all. But when we speak of a man doing something at his own "pleasure," or as he "pleases," we signify the mere fact of choice or preference; the mere determination of the will in a certain direction. Now, if by "pleasant" we mean that which influences choice, exercises a certain attractive force on the will, it is not a psychological truth, but a tautological assertion, to say that we desire what is pleasant—or even that we desire a thing in proportion as it appears pleasant. But if we take "pleasure" to mean "agreeable sensation," it then becomes a really debateable question whether our active impulses are always consciously directed towards the attainment of agreeable (or the avoidance of disagreeable) sensations as their end. And this is what we must understand Mr Mill to consider "so obvious, that it will hardly be disputed."

It is rather curious to find that the best-known of English moralists regards the exact opposite of what Mr Mill thinks so obvious, as being not merely a universal fact of our conscious experience, but even a necessary truth. Butler, as is well known, distinguishes self-love, or the impulse towards our own

[1] The confusion occurs in the most singular form in Hobbes, who actually identifies Pleasure and Appetite, "this motion in which consisteth pleasure, is a solicitation to draw near to the thing that pleaseth."

pleasure, from "particular movements towards particular external objects—honour, power, the harm or good of another;" the actions proceeding from which are "no otherwise interested than as every action of every creature must from the nature of the case be; for no one can act but from a desire, or choice, or preference of his own." Such particular passions or appetites are, he goes on to say, "*necessarily presupposed by the very idea* of an interested pursuit; since the very idea of interest or happiness consists in this, that an appetite or affection enjoys its object." We could not pursue pleasure at all, unless we had desires for something else than pleasure; for pleasure consists in the satisfaction of just these "extra-regarding" impulses.

Butler has clearly over-stated his case[1]; for many pleasures (as was just remarked) occur to us without any relation to previous desires, and it is quite *conceivable* that our appetitive consciousness might consist entirely of impulses towards such pleasures as these. But taken as a mere statement of actual fact, his doctrine faithfully represents a great, perhaps the greater, part of our experience. For throughout the whole scale of our impulses, sensual, emotional, and intellectual alike, we can distinguish the primary, extra-regarding desire, directed towards some end other than our own feelings, from the secondary, reflective, self-regarding impulse towards the pleasure which attends the fulfilment of the former.

§ 3. To begin with the impulses commonly placed lowest in the scale: the bodily appetites. Hunger is an impulse which terminates in the eating of food. Its indulgence is no doubt commonly attended with an agreeable feeling of more or less intensity: but it cannot, I think, be strictly said that this agreeable feeling is the object of hunger, and that it is the representation of this pleasure which stimulates the will of the hungry man. Of course hunger is frequently and naturally accompanied with anticipation of the pleasure of eating: but careful introspection seems to shew that the two are by no means inseparable: and that even when they occur together the pleasure is the object not of the primary appetite, but of a secondary desire which is to be distinguished

[1] The same argument is put in a more guarded, and, I think, unexceptionable form by Hutcheson.

from the former. I do not mean that the analysis which distinguishes the two kinds of impulse can in all cases be performed. Of much of our appetitive consciousness it seems truer to say that neither the strictly extra-regarding impulse nor the strictly self-regarding are yet "differentiated" (if I may borrow a term of Mr Herbert Spencer's). Still on other occasions this differentiation seems to be made quite clear by the different actions to which the two elements respectively prompt. For as the pleasure depends to a great extent on the strength of the appetite, the desire of the pleasure of eating prompts men not only to gratify but to stimulate hunger. The gourmand who takes a walk in order to enjoy his dinner, is impelled by one sensual impulse to aim at producing another: here at least the two cannot be identified.

Indeed it is so obvious that hunger is something different from the desire for pleasure, that some writers have regarded its volitional stimulus (and that of appetite generally) as a case of aversion from pain. This, however, seems to me a distinct mistake in psychological classification, though one very natural and easily explained. Hunger, and we may say desire generally, is a state of consciousness so far similar to pain, that in both we feel a stimulus prompting us to pass from the present state into a different one. But in pain the impulse is to get out of the present state and pass into some other state which is only negatively represented as different from the present: whereas in desire proper we are indifferent to the present consciousness, and the impulse is towards the realization of some future end positively conceived. The desire itself seems to be a state of excitement which becomes pleasurable or painful according to the nature of its concomitant circumstances, and is often not definitely either the one or the other. When it is, for any reason, baulked of its effect in causing action, it is generally painful in some degree: and so a secondary aversion to the state of desire is generated, which blends itself with the desire and may easily be confounded with it. But here again we may distinguish the two impulses by observing the different kinds of conduct to which they respectively prompt: for the aversion to the pain of ungratified desire, though it may act as an additional stimulus towards the gratification of the desire,

may also (and often does) prompt us to get rid of the pain by suppressing the desire. We may observe also that desire, even when it has become a pain or uneasiness, is often but very slightly painful: so that the mere aversion to it as pain is but a small part of the total volitional stimulus of which we are conscious.

When, however, the desire is having its natural effect in causing the actions which tend to its gratification, it seems to be commonly a more or less pleasurable consciousness: even when the satisfaction at which it aims is still remote. Thus it may even generate a secondary desire for itself as a pleasure, or at least for the total consciousness of which it forms an essential part. In fact the pleasures that accompany actions under the influence of a keen desire, which we may call generally the pleasures of Pursuit, constitute a considerable item in the total enjoyment of life. And, for our present purpose, it will be important to examine them carefully; as they are peculiarly well adapted to exhibit the difference between extra-regarding and self-regarding impulses. For here certainly we often find exemplified what Butler regards as the normal relation between desire and pleasure: the pleasure that we experience depends entirely on the pre-existence of a desire which cannot therefore be directed towards this pleasure as its object. Take, for example, a favourite amusement of rich Englishmen. What is the motive that impels a man to fox-hunting? It is not the pleasure of catching the fox. Nobody, before entering on the chase, represents to himself the killing of the fox as a source of gratification, apart from the eagerness produced by pursuit. What the fox-hunter deliberately and before the chase desires is, not the capture of the fox, but the pleasure of pursuing it: only of this pleasure a temporary vehement desire to catch the fox is an essential condition. This desire, which does not exist at first, is stimulated to considerable intensity by the pursuit itself: and when it has thus been stimulated the consciousness attending the pursuit becomes pleasurable, and the capture, which was originally indifferent, comes to afford a keen enjoyment[1].

[1] To avoid misapprehension, it may be well to observe that I am not trying to give a complete analysis of the whole enjoyment of hunting, but only to define accurately a single (but the most essential) element of it.

The same phenomenon is exhibited in the case of more intellectual kinds of pursuit, where the objects sought are more abstract. It often happens that a man, feeling his life languid and devoid of interests, begins to occupy himself in the pursuit of some end, for the sake not of the end but of the occupation. At first, very likely, the occupation is irksome: but soon, as he foresaw, the mere reaction of his active upon his appetitive nature makes him (as we say) "take an interest" in the end at which he is aiming: so that his pursuit becoming eager becomes also a source of agreeable sensations. Here it is no doubt true that in proportion as his desire for the end becomes strong, the attainment of it becomes pleasant in prospect: but it would be inverting cause and effect to say that it is this prospective pleasure that he desires.

When we compare these pleasures with those previously discussed, another important observation suggests itself. In the former case, though we could distinguish appetite, as it appears in consciousness, from the desire of the pleasure attending the satisfaction of appetite, there appeared to be no incompatibility between the two. The fact that the gourmand is dominated by the desire of the pleasures of eating in no way impedes the development in him of the appetite which is a necessary condition of these pleasures. But when we turn to the pleasures of the chase, we seem to perceive this incompatibility to a certain extent. In all forms of pursuit a certain enthusiasm is necessary to obtain full enjoyment. A man who maintains throughout an epicurean mood, fixing his aim on his own pleasure, does not catch the full spirit of the chase; his eagerness never gets just the sharpness of edge which imparts to the pleasure its highest zest and flavour. Here comes into view what we might call the fundamental paradox of Hedonism, that the self-regarding impulse, if too predominant, defeats its own aim. This effect is not visible, or at any rate is scarcely visible, in the case of passive sensual pleasures. But of our active enjoyments generally, whether the activities on which they attend are classed as "bodily" or as "intellectual" (as well as of many emotional pleasures), it may certainly be said that we cannot attain them, at least in their best form, so long as we directly aim at them. Nor is it only that the exercise of our

faculties is insufficiently stimulated by the mere desire of the pleasure attending it, and requires the presence of other more objective, extra-regarding impulses, in order to be fully developed: we may go further and say that these other impulses must be temporarily predominant and absorbing, if the exercise and its attendant gratification are to attain their full height. This is true (e. g.) of most other bodily exercises pursued as sports, no less than of the chase. It is true again of the pleasures of thought and study: these can only be really enjoyed by those who have an ardour of curiosity which carries the mind temporarily away from self and its sensations. In all kinds of Art, again, the exercise of the creative faculty is attended by intense and exquisite pleasures: but in order to get them, one must forget them: the desire of the artist is always said to be concentrated and fixed upon the realization of his ideal of beauty.

The important case of the benevolent affections is at first sight somewhat more doubtful. On the one hand it is of course true, that when those whom we love are pleased or pained, we ourselves feel sympathetic pleasure and pain: and further, that the flow of love or kindly feeling is itself highly pleasurable. So that it is at least plausible to interpret the benevolent impulse as aiming ultimately at the attainment of one or both of these two kinds of pleasures, or at the averting of sympathetic pain. But we may observe, first, that the impulse to beneficent action produced in us by sympathy is often so much out of proportion to any actual consciousness of sympathetic pleasure and pain in ourselves, that it would be paradoxical to regard this latter as its object. Often indeed we cannot but feel that a tale of actual suffering arouses in us an excitement on the whole more pleasurable than painful, like the excitement of witnessing a tragedy: and yet at the same time stirs in us an impulse to relieve it, even when the process of relieving is painful and laborious and involves various sacrifices of our own pleasures. Again, we may often free ourselves from sympathetic pain most easily by merely turning our thoughts from the external suffering that causes it: and we sometimes feel an egoistic impulse to do this, which we can then distinguish clearly from the properly sympathetic impulse prompting us

to relieve the original suffering. And finally the much-commended pleasures of benevolence seem to require, in order to be felt in any considerable degree, the pre-existence of a desire to do good to others for their sakes and not for our own. As Hutcheson explains, we may *cultivate* benevolent affection for the sake of the pleasures attending it (just as the gourmand cultivates appetite), but we cannot produce it at will, however strong may be our desire of these pleasures: and when it exists, even though it may owe its origin to a purely egoistic impulse, it is still essentially a desire to do good to others for their sake and not for our own.

It cannot perhaps be said that the self-abandonment and self-forgetfulness, which seemed an essential condition of the full development of the other elevated impulses before noticed, characterize benevolent affection normally and permanently; as love seems naturally to involve a desire for reciprocated love, strong in proportion to the intensity of the emotion: and thus the consciousness of self and of one's own pleasures and pains seems often heightened by the very intensity of the affection that binds one to others. Still we may at least say that this self-suppression and absorption of consciousness in the thought of other human beings and their happiness is observable as a frequent incident of all strong affections: and it is said that persons who love strongly often feel a sense of antagonism between the egoistic and altruistic elements of their desire, and an impulse to suppress the former, which sometimes exhibits itself in acts of fantastic and extravagant self-sacrifice.

If then our moral consciousness declares—as it certainly seems to do—that "the pleasure of virtue is one which can only "be obtained on the express condition of its not being the object sought[1]," we are not to treat this as an abnormal phenomenon, requiring a special explanation. It is merely another illustration of a psychological law which, as we have seen, is exemplified throughout the whole range of our desires. It is not (as Kant seems to hold) that the *natural* determination of the Will is by motives of pleasure and pain, but that when our action is truly *rational*, a higher law of causation comes into

[1] Lecky, *Hist. of European Morals*, Introduction.

play, apparently—though not really—contradictory of this natural law. Rather (as Butler maintains) in the promptings of Sense no less than in those of Intellect or Reason we find the phenomenon of strictly disinterested impulse: base and trivial external ends may be sought without ulterior aim, as well as the sublime and ideal: and there are many pleasures of the merely animal life which can only be obtained on condition of not being directly sought, no less than the satisfactions of a good conscience.

§ 4. So far I have been concerned to insist on the felt incompatibility of the self-regarding and extra-regarding impulses only as a means of proving their essential distinctness. I do not wish to overstate it, as it has sometimes been overstated by the anti-hedonistic moralists who have been perfectly right in drawing attention to it. I believe that in the commonest state of our activity the incompatibility is only momentary, and does not prevent a real harmony from being attained by means of a sort of alternating rhythm of the two impulses in consciousness. A man's predominant desire is, I think, most commonly not a conscious impulse towards pleasure; but where there is strong desire in any direction, there is commonly keen susceptibility to the corresponding pleasures; and the most devoted enthusiast is sustained in his work by the recurrent consciousness of such pleasures. But it is important to point out that the familiar and obvious instances of conflict between self-love and some extra-regarding impulse are not paradoxes and illusions to be explained away, but phenomena which the analysis of our consciousness in its normal state, when there is no such conflict, would lead us to expect. If we are continually acting from impulses whose immediate objects are something other than our own happiness, it is quite natural that we should occasionally yield to such impulses when they prompt us to an uncompensated sacrifice of pleasure. Thus a man of weak self-control, after fasting too long, may easily indulge his appetite for food to an extent which he knows to be unwholesome: and that not because the pleasure of eating appears to him, even in the moment of indulgence, at all worthy of consideration in comparison with the injury to health: but merely because he feels an impulse to eat food, too powerful to be

resisted. Thus, again, men have sacrificed all the enjoyments of life, and even life itself, to obtain posthumous fame: not from any illusory belief that they would be somehow capable of deriving pleasure from it, but from a direct desire of the future admiration of others, and a preference of it to their own pleasure. And so, again, when the sacrifice is made for some ideal end, as Truth, or Freedom, or Religion, or Humanity: it is or may be a real sacrifice of the individual's happiness, and not merely the preference of one highly refined pleasure (or of the absence of one special pain) to all the other elements of happiness. No doubt this preference is possible: a man may feel that the high and severe delight of serving his ideal is a "pearl of great price" outweighing in value all other pleasures. But he may also feel that the sacrifice will not repay *him*, and yet determine that it shall be made.

To sum up, in contravention of the doctrine that our conscious active impulses are always directed towards the production of agreeable sensations in ourselves, I would maintain that we find everywhere in consciousness extra-regarding impulse, directed towards something that is not pleasure; that in many cases this impulse is so far incompatible with the self-regarding that the two do not easily coexist in the same moment of consciousness; and that more occasionally (but by no means rarely) the two come into irreconcileable conflict, and prompt to opposite courses of action. And this incompatibility (though it is important to notice it in other instances) is no doubt specially prominent in the case of the impulse towards the end which competes in ethical controversy with pleasure: the love of virtue for its own sake, or desire to do what is right as such.

It may be said that whatever be the case with our present adult consciousness, our original impulses were all directed towards pleasure, and that any impulses otherwise directed are derived from these by "association of ideas." I do not think this can be proved; and the results of observation, as far as we can carry it, seem to tend in the opposite direction; as preponderant objectivity seems characteristic of the earlier stages of our consciousness, and the subjective attitude does not become habitual till later in life. But supposing the assertion were

proved, it would have little bearing on the present question. What I am concerned to maintain is that all men do not *now* desire pleasure, but rather other things: some in particular having impulses towards virtue, which may and do conflict with their desire for their own pleasure. It is no reply to this to say that all men *once* desired pleasure, except on the assumption that the earlier condition of our impulses is somehow better and more trustworthy than the later. But this assumption would require us to prefer the coarsest and lowest of our pleasures to those that are more elevated and refined: which no one would maintain to be reasonable.

CHAPTER V.

FREE WILL.

§ 1. In the preceding chapters I have treated first of rational, and secondly of disinterested action, without introducing the vexed question of the Freedom of the Will. The metaphysical difficulties connected with this question have been proved by long dialectical experience to be so great, and appear to me so insoluble in the present state of our faculties, knowledge, and fundamental notions, that I am anxious to confine them within as strict limits as I can, and keep as much of my subject as possible free from their perturbing influence. And I am convinced that the identification which Kant and others after him have sought to establish between Free Action and (1) Rational, (2) Disinterested action, is in neither case required as an assumption nor adequately supported by psychological experience, while in the latter case it is distinctly erroneous. Conduct strictly disinterested, that is, disregardful of foreseen balance of pleasure to ourselves, is found, as I have tried to shew, in the most instinctive and unconscious as well as in the most deliberate and self-conscious region of our active life: nay, it appears to exist (as far as any phenomenon known to us only by introspective observation may be thought to exist) in the lower animals. We have at any rate just as much reason to say that a faithful dog acts disinterestedly, as we have to say that he acts interestedly. Again, the conception of acting rationally, that is from an impulse in harmony with an intellectual apprehension of an objective rule, or intrinsically desirable end, is certainly not bound up with the notion of Free

Will: it remains unaltered, if Free Will be a chimera. At the same time it must be allowed that in behalf of this latter connexion, a plausible appeal may be made to our inner experience. It may fairly be said that[1] "we consider our Reason as being ourselves rather than our desires and affections. We speak of Desire, Love, Anger, as mastering *us*, or of *ourselves* as controlling them. If we decide to prefer some remote and abstract good to immediate pleasures, or to conform to a rule which brings us present pain, (which decision implies exercise of Reason,) we more particularly consider such acts as our *own* acts." Still even if this language represented a uniform experience (which it does not) it would not adequately justify the Kantian proposition. For, granted that when Reason yields to passion we lapse from freedom to slavery, still this is a voluntary slavery, a free abnegation of freedom, even in the view of Libertarians: or indeed especially in their view, as they especially insist that we are responsible for such concessions. But it should be observed that the conflict in question does not always appear in consciousness as a conflict between Reason and blind passion, between "ourselves" on the one hand and a force of nature on the other. We are sometimes conscious of deliberately preferring what we clearly see to be an irrational course of action: not merely self-interest to duty (for here is rather a conflict of claims to rationality than clear irrationality): but (e.g.) port wine to health, revenge to reputation, &c. And if it be said that in such cases we perceive on reflection that we have been "the slaves of our desires and appetites:" it may be answered that sometimes when we have acted morally, a reaction comes, another state succeeds, in which we seem to ourselves to have been in bondage to idle scruples, and vain or exaggerated opinions of duty. Nay, even in the conflict itself we sometimes change sides: the moral law, though we still recognise its authority, suddenly seems to become external to us, and instead of identifying ourselves with the Reason that prescribes obedience to it, we seem to feel that the real ego is impulsively struggling to violate it. Indeed there are many persons, to whom, from a preponderance of the emotional and active elements in their nature, the state of re-

[1] Whewell, *Elements of Morality*, Bk. I. c. ii.

flection in which action is most deliberate is essentially irksome and depressing: they do not seem to themselves truly to exist unless when they are borne along upon some tide of impulse: so that when they act most deliberately, they feel least really alive, least their real selves: the more they yield, at any rate to some impulse, the "freer," in a sense, they seem to be. Such persons certainly do not give much heed to philosophy: but philosophy must give heed to them and to the deliverances of their consciousness.

I cannot therefore accept that identification of Free Will with Practical Reason, which lays the transcendental fact of Freedom at the foundation of Ethics. Indeed I hold with many English moralists that it would be quite possible to compose a treatise on Ethics which should completely ignore the Free-will controversy. At the same time I think that such a treatment would not only be felt to be shallow, but would omit the consideration of really important practical questions. Although it seems to me that the question of the Freedom of the Will, in its fundamental and general aspect, has no bearing upon the determination of what is intrinsically good for man, or ideally right and reasonable in human conduct: I think that it has a special and limited connexion with Ethics, which it is highly important to consider. If, however, it had been indispensable, for the satisfactory treatment of my subject, to offer a solution of the general question, the present treatise would not have been written. The "Freedom of the Will" presents itself to me as an unsolved problem: a subject on which I am obliged to confess that I have no knowledge, because I have no really consistent thought: on which therefore I have reason to believe that my absence of knowledge springs from the imperfect state of my conceptions. This imperfection, however, I am unable to remove, and therefore I am forced to suspend my judgment on the question. The reasons for this suspense I will proceed to give, partly from the strong interest which all persons who concern themselves with moral theories have always taken in this time-honoured topic; and partly because they are almost necessary to introduce and explain my treatment of the question as standing in a merely special and very restricted relation to systematic morality.

§ 2. We must begin by defining the problem as precisely as possible. The assertion is often made that there is really no difficulty at all to be solved, and that the illusory belief that there is a difficulty springs from inaccuracy or shallowness of thought. And I am quite willing to believe that if we could apply the right conceptions to the facts we should either ask no question at all, or one that could be answered as soon as asked. But in so far as any actual attempts to shew the illusoriness of the difficulty have ever seemed plausible, it has been, I think, in consequence of careless statement of the question, which most men at present are irresistibly impelled to ask. For clearness' sake I will put this question in the following different forms.

Is my voluntary action at any moment completely determined by (1) my character as it has been partly inherited, partly formed by my past actions and feelings, and (2) my circumstances, or the external influences acting on me at the moment? or not? Could the volition that I am just about to originate be certainly calculated by any one who knew thoroughly my nature at this moment and the forces acting upon me? or is there a strictly incalculable element in it? Is the self to which I refer it as cause a self of determinate moral qualities (which have more or less become known to me and to others from my past actions), or "myself" in some other sense, some "unconditioned" ego lying within or behind the "conditioned[1]?"

I have avoided using terms which imply materialistic assumptions, because, though a materialist will naturally be a determinist, a determinist need not be a materialist. In the above questions a materialist would substitute "brain and nervous system" for "character," and thereby obtain certainly a

[1] It is not uncommon to conceive of each volition as connected by uniform laws with our past states of consciousness. But any uniformities we might trace among a man's past consciousnesses, even if we knew them all, would yet give us very imperfect guidance as to his future action: as there would be left out of account

(1) all inborn tendencies and susceptibilities, as yet latent or incompletely exhibited;

(2) all past physical influences, of which the effects had not been perfectly represented in consciousness.

clearer notion; but I have taken the view of common sense, or Natural Dualism, which distinguishes the agent from his body. For the present purpose the difference is unimportant. The substantial dispute relates to the causal connexion of any volition with the state of things at the preceding instant, whether we specify these as "character and circumstances," or "brain and environing forces."

In favour of the connexion there is a cumulative argument so strong as almost to amount to complete proof. The belief that events are determinately related to the state of things immediately preceding them, is now held by all competent thinkers in respect of all kinds of occurrences except human volitions. It has steadily grown both intensively and extensively, both in clearness and certainty of conviction and in universality of application, as the human mind has developed and human experience has been systematized and enlarged. Step by step in successive departments of fact conflicting modes of thought have receded and faded, until at length they have vanished everywhere, except from this mysterious citadel of Will. Everywhere else the belief is so firmly established that some declare its opposite to be inconceivable: others even maintain that it always was so. Every scientific procedure assumes it: each success of science confirms it. And not only are we finding ever new proof that events are cognizably determined, but also that the different modes of determination of different kinds of events are fundamentally identical and mutually dependent: and naturally with the increasing conviction of the essential unity of the cognizable universe, increases the indisposition to allow the exceptional character claimed by Libertarians for the department of human action.

Again, when we contemplate the action of man, we find that a large portion of it is originated unconsciously: all such action is undeniably determined by physical causes: and we find that no clear line can be drawn between acts of this kind, and those which are conscious and voluntary. Not only are many acts of the former class entirely similar to those of the latter, except in being unconscious: but we remark further that actions which we habitually perform continually pass from the latter class into the former: and the further we investigate, the more the

conclusion is forced upon us, that there is no kind of action originated by conscious volition which cannot also, under certain circumstances, be originated unconsciously. Again, when we look closely at our conscious acts, we find that in respect of many of these, done suddenly and (as we say) "from impulse," under the stimulus of a momentary sensation or emotion, our consciousness does not even suggest that they are not completely determined by the strength of the stimulus and the state of our previously determined temperament and character at the time of its operation. Such acts indeed we often call "involuntary[1]:" and here again it is difficult to draw a line clearly separating from such the strictly voluntary.

Further, we always explain[2] the voluntary action of all men except ourselves on the principle of causation by character and circumstances. Indeed otherwise social life would be impossible: for the life of man in society involves daily a mass of minute forecasts of the actions of other men, founded on experience whether of mankind generally or of particular classes of men, or of individuals; who are thus necessarily regarded as things having determinate properties, causes whose effects are calculable. We infer generally the future actions of those whom we know from their past actions: and if our forecast turns out in any case to be erroneous, we do not attribute the discrepancy to the disturbing influence of Free Will, but to our incomplete acquaintance with their character and motives. And passing from individuals to communities, whether we believe in a "social science" or not, we all admit and take part in discussions of social phenomena in which the same principle is assumed: and however we may differ as to particular theories, we never doubt the validity of the method: and if we find anything inexplicable in history, past or present, it never occurs to us to attribute it to an extensive exercise of free will in a particular direction. Nay even as regards our own actions, however "free" we feel ourselves at any moment, however unconstrained by present motives and

[1] Aristotle calls them voluntary (ἑκούσια) but not purposed (προαιρετά).

[2] I do not mean that this is the only view that we take of the conduct of others: I hold (as will presently appear) that in judging of their conduct morally, we naturally apply the conception of Free Will. But we do not naturally regard it as one kind of causation, limiting and counteracting the other kind.

circumstances and unfettered by the result of what we have previously been and felt our volitional choice may appear: still when it is once well past, and we survey it in the series of our actions, its relations of causation and resemblance to other parts of our life appear, and we naturally explain it as an effect of our nature, education and circumstances. Nay, we even apply the same conceptions to our future action, and the more, in proportion as our moral sentiments are developed: for with our sense of duty generally increases our sense of the duty of moral culture, and our desire of self-improvement: and the possibility of moral self-culture depends on the assumption that by a present volition we can determine to some extent our actions in the more or less remote future. No doubt we habitually take at the same time the opposite, Libertarian, view as to our future: we believe, for example, that we can resist to-morrow and henceforward temptations to which we have continually yielded in the past. But it should be observed that this belief is (as moralists of all schools admit and even urge) *at any rate to a great extent* illusory and misleading. Though Libertarians contend that it is *possible* for us at any moment to act contrary to our formed character and previous custom: still, they and Determinists alike teach that it is much less easy than men commonly imagine to break the subtle unfelt trammels of habit.

It is said, however, that the conception of the Freedom of the Will, alien as it may be to speculative science, both generally and in the special department of human action, is yet indispensable to Ethics and Jurisprudence: we may exclude it from our systematic apprehension of what is, but it is forced upon us irresistibly in our systematic elaboration of what ought to be. Our recognition of the moral law, says Kant, is *ratio cognoscendi* of the Freedom of the Will: "ought" implies "can:" the real voluntariness of an action is the criterion by which we distinguish it as a proper subject of moral approbation and disapprobation. The notion of Justice, say jurists of the same school, and with it the reasonableness of the criminal law, depend on the assumption of Free Will: unless a man could have acted otherwise than he did, he cannot really have either merit or demerit: and if he has not merit or demerit, it is repugnant to the moral reason and sentiments of mankind to reward and punish him.

Now it seems to me clear that this is the natural and primary view of the matter: that, on the Determinist theory, "ought," "responsibility," "desert," and similar terms, have to be used, if at all, in new significations: and that the conception of Freedom is, so to say, the pivot upon which our moral sentiments naturally play. On the other hand I cannot deny that the Determinist can give to the fundamental terms of Ethics perfectly clear and definite meanings: that the distinctions thus obtained give us a practically sufficient basis for criminal law: while the moral sentiments actually existing are seen to be appropriate and useful, as a part of the natural adaptation of social man to his conditions of life. The Determinist allows that, in a sense, "ought" implies "can," that a man is only morally bound to do what is "in his power," and that only acts from which a man "could have abstained" are proper subjects of punishment or moral condemnation. But he explains "can" and "in his power" to imply only the absence of all insuperable obstacles *except* want of sufficient motive. It is precisely in such cases, he maintains, that punishment and the expression of moral displeasure are required to supply the desiderated motive force. True, the meaning of punishment is altered: it is no longer properly retributory, but reformatory and preventive: but it may be fairly said that this is the more practical view, and the one towards which civilization—quite apart from the Free-will controversy—seems to tend. And so of the moral feelings and judgments. If the Libertarian urges that it is unreasonable to resent involuntary harm any more than voluntary, as both are equally resultant effects of similar complex natural forces: the Determinist answers that the reasonableness depends on the effect of the resentment, which obviously tends to prevent the one kind of action and not the other: nay, he retorts, indignation is only reasonable on the assumption that men's actions are determined by motives, among which the fear of others' indignation may be reckoned. It may be replied, that however useful moral sentiments may be on this theory, its general adoption would practically prevent their development and effective operation. But thus the ground is shifted and the belief in Free Will asserted to be necessary not logically, as an assumption involved in

ethical and jural reasoning; but practically, as the only means to a desirable end. Such an assertion stands in need of much more empirical proof than has ever yet been offered: and even if it were proved, to conclude from the practical efficacy of the belief to its speculative truth is to use a doubtful and now generally discredited method of inference.

§ 3. This almost overwhelming cumulative proof seems, however, more than balanced by a single argument on the other side: the immediate affirmation of consciousness in the moment of deliberate volition. It is impossible for me to think, at such a moment, that my volition is completely determined by my formed character and the motives acting upon it. The opposite conviction is so strong as to be absolutely unshaken by the evidence brought against it. I cannot believe it to be illusory. So far it is unlike the erroneous intuitions which occur in the exercise of the senses: as (e. g.) the misperceptions of sight or hearing. For experience soon teaches me to regard these as appearances whose suggestions are misleading: but no amount of experience of the sway of motives even tends to make me distrust my intuitive consciousness that in resolving after deliberation I exercise free choice as to which of the motives acting upon me shall prevail. Nothing short of absolute proof that this consciousness is erroneous could overcome the force with which it announces itself as certain.

Now I cannot perceive that such proof has been given: and hence I am conscious that I habitually think upon this subject in two conflicting modes, between which I cannot pretend to offer any reconciliation. But it seems possible to reduce this conflict within narrower limits than it sometimes occupies, by scrutinizing carefully this consciousness of Freedom, and ascertaining exactly the extent of its affirmation.

In the first place, as was said, it seems to be only in moments of Deliberation that I become conscious of Freedom (in the sense in which the word is here used): conscious, that is, that "I" am to some extent distinct from and independent of my formed character, and that I can choose to be swayed by motives, of which the impulsive force (so far as I can estimate it) is less than that of conflicting motives.

This consciousness of Freedom seems only to emerge when

self-consciousness reaches a certain degree of intensity and prominence: but self-consciousness, though a permanent element of our conscious life, is during a great part of it not a prominent element, and is often almost evanescent. Frequently, even for long periods, consciousness is almost entirely absorbed in objective contemplation and action: and we seem to act from impulse and habit, without reflection, and therefore without the possibility of any separation or distinction between the Free Self and the Formed Character. At such times we cannot, from the nature of the case, analyse introspectively the phenomenon of volition when actually present: for introspection involves precisely that higher degree of self-consciousness, the absence of which characterizes the state in question. But in so far as we can observe it in memory, the analysis given by the Determinist school (which was found inadequate in the case of deliberate action) is here completely satisfactory. We find nothing more in the phenomenon than an antecedent passive consciousness—pleasure or pain or desire or aversion—and a consequent active consciousness, exertion or effort. Even if the Libertarian will not admit that Freedom is ever entirely absent, any more than self-consciousness, he must at any rate allow that it is at such times latent and evanescent: and that what we then actually do is entirely accounted for by our formed tendencies to action and susceptibilities of feeling, together with the external influences operating on us.

Secondly, it is important to observe exactly what it is that the Will is free to effect: or rather (for we need not pursue the inquiry upon exclusively Libertarian assumptions) what the range of effects is, which it would be possible to cause by human volition, provided that adequate motive were not wanting. These effects seem to be of three kinds: first, changes in the external world consequent upon muscular contractions: secondly, changes in the train of ideas and feelings that constitutes our conscious life: and thirdly, changes in the permanent tendencies to action that compose what is called our character.

I. The sphere of volitional causation is by some confined entirely to such events as can be produced by muscular contractions: and certainly these constitute the most obvious and

prominent part of it. As regards these, it is sometimes said that it is properly the muscular contraction that we will, and not the more remote effects: for these require the concurrence of other causes, and therefore we can never be absolutely certain that they will follow. But no more is it certain, strictly speaking, that the muscular contraction will follow, since our limb may be paralyzed, &c. And hence some say that the immediate object of the will is some molecular change in the motor nerves. And this is no doubt an inseparable concomitant of such volitions: but we are never thinking of our motor nerves and their changes, nor indeed commonly of the muscular contractions that follow them: and therefore it seems a misuse of terms to describe either as the "object" of the mind in willing: since it is always some more remote effect, which we consciously will and intend. Still of all effects of our will on the external world, some contraction of our muscles is always an indispensable antecedent: and when that is over our part in the causation is completed.

II. We can control to some extent our thoughts and feelings. We cannot indeed directly summon or dismiss any thought or state of consciousness: and in the case of emotion an important part of what we commonly call "control of feeling" comes under the head just discussed. Our control over our muscles enables us to keep down the expression of the feeling and to resist its promptings to action: and as the giving free vent to a feeling tends, generally speaking, to sustain and prolong it, this muscular control amounts to a certain power over the emotion. But there is not the same connexion between our muscular system and our thoughts: and yet experience shews that most men (though some, no doubt, much more than others) can voluntarily determine the direction of their thoughts, and pursue at will a given line of meditation. How then is this control exercised, and what is it precisely that the effort of will effects? It seems to be the concentration of our consciousness on a part of that which is present to it, so that this part grows more vivid and clear, while the rest tends to become obscure and ultimately to vanish. Frequently this voluntary exertion is only needed to initiate a train of ideas, which is afterwards continued without effort: as in recalling a

series of past events or going through a familiar train of reasoning. By such concentration we can free ourselves of many thoughts and feelings upon which we do not wish to dwell: but our power to do this is very limited, and if the feeling be strong and its cause persistent, it requires a very unusual effort of will to banish it thus.

III. It is, however, to that other effect of volition which I have called "alteration of character" that I especially wish to direct the reader's attention. I do not find this generally recognised by psychologists: yet there seems no doubt that common experience testifies to it, and it particularly requires notice in an ethical treatise. For it is in making resolutions for future conduct that it is of most practical importance for us to know what is within the power of the will. Take an example. A man has been in the habit of drinking too much brandy nightly: one morning he resolves that he will do so no more. In making this resolve he acts under the belief that by a present volition he can so far alter his habitual tendency to indulgence in brandy, that some hours hence he will resist the full force of his habitual craving for the stimulant. Now whether this belief is well or ill-founded is not the question usually discussed between Determinists and Libertarians: they rather debate whether in taking the resolution one is free or entirely swayed by motives, &c. At the same time the two questions are liable to be confused. It is sometimes vaguely thought that a belief in Free Will requires us to maintain that at any moment we can alter our habits to any extent by a sufficiently strong exertion. And no doubt most commonly when we make such efforts, we believe at the moment that they will be completely effectual. We will to do something hours or days hence with the same confidence with which we will to do something next minute: and do not very clearly distinguish the two. But on reflection, no one, I think, will maintain that a future act is in his power in the same sense that a present one is: or that at the moment of making such a resolution he has an immediate cognition of its future effects. Not only does continual experience shew us that such resolves have a limited and too frequently an inadequate effect: but the common belief seems actually inconsistent with the very doctrine of Free Will that is thought to justify

it: for if by a present volition I can finally determine a future act, when the time comes to do that act I shall find myself no longer free. We must therefore accept the conclusion that each such resolve has only a limited effect: and that we cannot know when making it whether this effect will exhibit itself in the performance of the act resolved upon. At the same time it would be flagrantly contrary to experience to deny altogether this effect of volition. Such resolves do sometimes suddenly change old habits: and when they fail of this, they generally substitute a painful struggle for smooth and easy indulgence. They always have some effect, though of very varying intensity. And this effect, such as it is, seems to be often strictly volitional. No doubt the same sort of change is sometimes brought about by a powerful emotional shock, due to extraneous causes: and hence it might be inferred that in all cases it is a powerful impression of an emotional kind that produces the effect: and that the will is only concerned in concentrating our attention on the benefits to be gained or evils to be avoided by the change of habit, and so intensifying the impression of these. But though this kind of voluntary contemplation is a useful auxiliary to good resolutions, it does not seem to be this effort of will that constitutes the resolution: we can clearly distinguish the two. Hence this third effect of volition cannot be resolved into the second, but must be stated separately.

§ 4. Let us now proceed to examine how far the question of Free Will is necessarily included in an investigation of ethical truth. Here the importance of the discussion in the preceding chapter appears. For if it were true that the Will is restricted to the two alternatives of (1) Freedom and (2) Determination by pleasure and pain, a Determinist scheme of morality would naturally (though, as we saw, not necessarily) be constructed on an Epicurean or egoistic basis. But I have endeavoured to shew that there are no grounds for rejecting the *primâ facie* testimony of experience to the existence of disinterested impulses, and among them of the conscientious impulse to do what is right as such. The Determinist therefore may appeal to this impulse just as much as the Libertarian: the only difference being that while the Determinist holds that in many cases it certainly cannot prevail over opposing forces, the

Libertarian only thinks that it too probably will not prevail, although it is always possible that it may.

Nor again does it appear that there will be any general difference between the two schools in determining the details of duty.

We saw that it is easy to throw into a form suitable to Determinism the general characteristic of duty "that it is in our power to do it:" we have only to say "that there is no obstacle to our doing it except absence of motive:" a formula which is, of course, practically convertible with the other. And so far as the absolute duties are concerned, which are prominent in intuitional systems, the moralist does not consider in prescribing them whether any one is likely to do them or not. In precisely determining relative and indefinite duties, we have, no doubt, to consider circumstances present and future, and among these the probable future conduct not only of other men, but also of ourselves. For it is often foolish and wrong to perform a single act of (say) benevolence, unless others are to follow it. But even here no practical difference will emerge between Determinists and Libertarians, if the latter admit the limitations of Free Will, as above expounded. For if by any effort of resolution at the present moment we can only produce a certain limited effect upon our character and so indirectly upon our action at some future time, and immediate consciousness cannot tell us that this effect will be adequate to the occasion, nor indeed how great it will really prove to be: we ought obviously before pledging ourselves to any future course of action to estimate carefully, from our experience of ourselves and general knowledge of human nature, what the probability is of our keeping present resolutions in the circumstances in which we are likely to be placed. It is no doubt morally most important that we should not tranquilly acquiesce in any weakness or want of self-control: but the fact remains that such weakness is not curable by a single volition: and whatever we can do towards curing it by any effort of will at any moment, is as clearly enjoined by reason on the Determinist theory as it is on the Libertarian. On neither theory is it reasonable that we should deceive ourselves as to the extent of our weakness, or ignore it in the forecast of our conduct, or suppose it more easily remediable than it really is.

There seems therefore to be no general connexion between systematic ethics and the disputed question of Free Will. But it seems to be in a special manner involved in the determination of one particular branch of morality; namely, Justice. For Justice as commonly understood implies the due requital of good and ill Desert, and the notion of Desert when closely scrutinized seems to involve free choice of good or evil: if there is really no such free choice, there does not seem to be, strictly speaking, any Desert: so that Justice has to be determined on a different principle. Thus as we saw, on the Determinist theory, punishment is regarded as preventive instead of retributive. And though roughly and generally the two views will coincide in practice, it is easy to see that they may diverge to a considerable extent, especially as regards the *quantity* of punishment that ought to be inflicted in any case: for example, the fact that men are urged by strong natural impulses to commit a crime may be a reason for making its punishment more severe, if this be considered purely as preventive: but it certainly seems to render the ill-desert of the act less rather than greater. But the further consideration of this point had better be deferred till we have examined more closely the notion of Justice[1].

[1] Cf. Book III. c. 5.

CHAPTER VI.

THE METHODS OF ETHICS.

§ 1. THE results of the discussions in the last three chapters may be thus briefly stated.

The prevailing motive in conscious action is not always an impulse towards the attainment of pleasure or the avoidance of pain: as we experience powerful impulses towards the realization of something other than a state of our own consciousness: such as the welfare of those who are to live after us, or the triumph of a cause which we shall never see triumphant. Among these latter impulses we may place the desire to do what is right and reasonable as such, of which the characteristic is that, as Butler says, it claims supremacy: i.e. that in so far as we are moral beings we think that it *ought* to prevail, whether it does or not. This desire we may consider as existing in more or less strength in different persons according to the nature, education and circumstances of each: so that though it seems impossible not to believe ourselves free in the moment of deliberate volition, still the question of the "Freedom of the Will" need not arise in deciding generally between ethical systems. A Determinist need not believe himself to act universally from self-interest alone: on the other hand a Libertarian must admit that he may deliberately prefer the pleasures of sense to the dictates of duty.

Still, when a man deliberates, he generally desires to act in accordance with reason. Now though there is a partial rationality in any kind of conduct that is consistent, and such that, when it is viewed as a whole, there appears some principle and method of preference to which it all conforms: yet

this is no more than a partial, or, we may almost say, merely apparent rationality. Many men whose conduct has become systematic by the predominance of some one impulse do not yet maintain that the ends thus systematically sought are ends in themselves rational. They admit that for such ends reasons have to be given; and sometimes they offer such reasons, and sometimes are conscious that they cannot give them, and that their conduct, however consistent, is profoundly irrational.

The Methods of systematizing conduct, that claim to be reasonable, are thus found to be limited in number: and they seem to be those enumerated in the first chapter.

For, in the first place, Happiness appears to be a reasonable end (although we reject the doctrine that we all necessarily seek it): if I can say of any action that it makes me happier, it seems that no further account need be given of my doing it. Though when we ask *whose* Happiness, a controversy emerges: for to some it seems that the agent ought to seek his own happiness, and that this is what each individual's reason must necessarily prescribe to him: while others think that the view of reason is essentially universal, and that it cannot be reasonable to aim ultimately at the happiness of any one individual rather than that of any other equally deserving and susceptible of it. There are therefore two views and methods in which Happiness is regarded as the ultimate and rational end of actions: in the one it is the agent's happiness which is so regarded, in the other the happiness of all men, or all sentient beings. It is of course possible to adopt an end intermediate between the two, and to aim at the happiness of some limited portion of mankind, such as one's family or nation or race: but any such limitation seems arbitrary, and probably no one would maintain it to be reasonable *per se*, but only as the most practical way of seeking the general happiness, or as a means of attaining one's own.

Again, Perfection or Excellence is thought a rational end, and if by anything that we can do we can make our own nature or any part of the world around us better, more perfect and excellent in its kind, we seem to need no further reason for doing it. And here, too, the Perfection aimed at may be either individual or universal. But in this case it would seem

that more divergent views of the universal end are possible: for we are not necessarily limited as in the case of happiness to the consideration of mankind or of sentient beings: as inanimate things also seem to have a perfection and excellence of their own and to be capable of being made better or worse in their kind. And this excellence or one species of it we call beauty: and we find that men have actually devoted their lives to the embodiment and realization of some ideal of beauty in some kind of matter. But whether beauty or any other quality of inanimate objects can on reflection be regarded as good or desirable in itself and out of relation to consciousness, we must presently consider[1]: meanwhile it is more clearly and admittedly rational to take the perfection or excellence of oneself or of other human beings as an ultimate end.

But again, it is a common opinion that of truly right action a great part is not done for any end outside of and apart from the action itself, but merely because it is right or good; and that such right or good action can be classified under certain general heads, as Justice, Truth, &c.: so that to each such division corresponds a proposition, "that we ought to do what is just, truthful, &c.:" and that these propositions are to be taken as ethical axioms, requiring no proof and constituting in themselves so many final reasons for the performance of the actions denoted by the general terms. This is commonly called the Intuitional theory of morals, and I have thought it best to term the method founded upon it Intuitionism; because its rules are thought to be ascertained by direct intuition of the actions themselves, instead of being inferred from consideration of their consequences. There are serious objections to this term, and even the distinction just given does not turn out to be as clear and sharp as could be desired: but no other word would so readily bring to the reader's mind the general object which I wish it to denote.

§ 2. It may seem, however, that I have by no means exhausted the list of reasons which are widely accepted as ultimate grounds of action. Many religious persons think that the highest reason for doing anything is that it is God's Will: and

[1] Cf. *post*, c. 9.

famous schools of philosophy have put forward the principle of "living according to Nature" as really ultimate. And I cannot deny that we have here principles *primâ facie* different from those above examined, and notions sufficiently general to give the *summum genus* of right conduct. But I think we shall find, when we come to consider more closely the methods to which these principles lead, that they either lie outside the scope of the present inquiry, or resolve themselves into one or other of those above indicated: or perhaps into a confused blending of two or more of these. For if we ask how God's Will is to be ascertained we are referred either to Revelation or to Reason. Revelation is distinguished as "internal" and "external." Internal revelation must be either ecstatic, in which case it does not seem possible to systematize its results at all; or not ecstatic, in which case its operation cannot be introspectively distinguished from that of our ordinary cognitive faculties, and so the resulting method seems to coincide with some form of Intuitionism. If, again, an external Revelation is proposed as the standard, we are led into inquiries as to its nature and evidences, which carry us beyond the range of Ethics proper: in fact Ethics, in this case, must be pursued as a department of Scriptural Interpretation. On the other hand, when we try to ascertain by reason the Divine Will, the practical result is always found to coincide with that of one or other of the methods above delineated. For either it is assumed that God desires the happiness of men, in which case our efforts should be concentrated on its production: or that He desires their perfection and that that should be our end: or that whatever His end may be (into which perhaps we have no right to inquire) He has written His Laws in our hearts, these being the rules of conduct which are commonly thought to be intuitively known. So that "conformity to God's Will," though it may supply a new motive for doing what we believe to be right, does not—apart from Revelation—suggest any special criterion of rightness. It rather presents itself as a common form or point of view under which a religious mind naturally regards whatever method of determining conduct it apprehends to be rational. And the same will, I think, be found to be the case with "life according to Nature," though as this latter

notion is somewhat ambiguous, its thorough investigation is more difficult.

For in speaking of "conformity to Nature" men commonly imply more or less consciously an intelligent design exhibited in the natural world. Otherwise by "natural" it would seem that we could only mean the *common* as opposed to the rare and exceptional, or the *original* as opposed to that which is later in development; or, negatively, that which is not due to the deliberate action of human wills. But no one would maintain that these characteristics, considered in themselves and not as indications of design, are clear criteria of the reasonable in conduct: and that it is absolutely our duty to do what most persons do, or what our ancestors did, or what our infantile impulses suggested, or what we should have been impelled to do, but for the direct or indirect influence of society. If however we are really implying an intelligent design, this principle seems to resolve itself into the one just discussed. It will be said, perhaps, that on this theory the Divine Will is not ascertained in either of the two alternative ways before discussed: being not learnt from Revelation or reasoning on the Divine attributes, but collected from observations of natural phenomena. We are supposed to view the natural world, or more particularly our own frames and the *ensemble* of our impulses and dispositions, as a kind of machine of which we have to find, by looking at it, the proper function and use. But though it is not difficult to describe, in a way that all would accept, the general outline of man's natural life, we cannot obtain from such contemplation a method for solving practical problems. For it does not help us to say with Butler "that the supremacy of Reason is Natural," as we start by assuming that we are to do what Reason prescribes, and that this is conformity to Nature, and so our line of thought would become circular: nor can we avoid this circle by substituting for Reason Conscience or the Moral sentiments; because that in us which claims authority is never a mere sentiment, but always a faculty cognisant of an objective rule or imperative which exists independently of its effect on our feelings, and such a faculty is what we must mean by Reason. How then is the Nature that we are to follow to be distinguished from our Practical Reason, so as to

become a guide to it? In a sense, as Butler observes, any impulse is natural: but it is manifestly idle to bid us follow Nature in this sense: for the question of duty is never raised except when we are conscious of a conflict of impulses, and wish to know which to follow. And it will scarcely be said that we are always to follow the impulse that is felt as the strongest: for this would be rather a rejection than an interpretation of the dictates of reason, and would sometimes lead to conduct flagrantly irrational. Nor does it seem, on reflection, that any of the three meanings before suggested (which are all, I think, involved in the current notion of "natural") will serve our purpose. For we can hardly maintain that the frequency of an impulse or the priority of its appearance in time is clearly indicative that God designs us to follow it: especially since, when we take a retrospective view of the history of the human race, we find that some impulses which all admire, such as the love of knowledge and enthusiastic philanthropy, are both rarer and later in their appearance than others which all despise. Nor, again, can we eschew as unnatural and opposed to the Divine design all such impulses as have been produced in us by the institutions of society, or our use of human arrangements and contrivances, or that result in any way from the deliberate action of our fellow-men: for this were arbitrarily to exclude society and human action from the scope of the Divine purposes. And besides it is clear that many impulses so generated are auxiliary to morality and in other ways beneficial: and though others no doubt are pernicious and misleading, it seems that we can only distinguish these latter from the former by taking note of their effects, and not by any precision that reflection can give to the notion of "natural." And if we take a more physical view of our nature and endeavour to ascertain for what end our corporeal frame was constructed, we find that such contemplation determines very little. We can tell from our nutritive system that we are intended to take food, and we can say that we are intended to exercise our various muscles in some way or other, and move our various limbs, and perhaps that we are to exercise our brain and organs of sense. But this carries us a very trifling way, for the practical question almost always is, not whether we are to use our organs or leave them unused, but to what extent

or in what manner we are to use them: and when men attempt to enunciate the teachings of Nature on these points, their divergence seems to shew that they are merely formulating the habits and instincts that result from varying custom, or confused intuitions of expediency.

On the whole, it appears to me that no definition that has ever been offered of this notion exhibits it as capable of being laid at the basis of an ethical system. And no one maintains that "natural" like "beautiful" is a notion that though indefinable is yet clear, being derived from a simple unanalysable impression. No doubt, when we have otherwise determined the right and wrong in conduct, we may assert that what is right is necessarily conformable to Nature (or to the Divine Will), and that this latter notion supplies the ultimate ground and reasonable motive for doing what is right. But at any rate it is not in itself sufficiently precise to give a practical criterion of the rightness of actions.

§ 3. It thus appears that not all the different views that are taken of the ultimate reason for obeying rules of conduct lead to different methods of determining what these rules shall be. Indeed we seem to find on closer examination that there is no necessary connexion between the Method and the Ultimate Reason in an ethical system: almost any method may be connected with almost any ultimate reason by means of some possible—or even plausible—assumption. Hence arises considerable perplexity and confusion in the classification and comparison of ethical systems: for these appear to have different affinities according as we consider Method or Ultimate Reason, and hence are not easy to classify even when both elements are made clear: which is often not the case, as some writers lay stress on Method, and are hesitating and uncertain in their enunciation of Ultimate Reason, while others chiefly confine themselves to the discussion of the latter and leave the former obscure.

These and other difficulties in our classification will be seen more clearly as our investigation proceeds. In the meantime the list of first principles already given seems to include all that have a *primâ facie* claim to be included: and to afford the most convenient classification for the current modes of determining right conduct. At the same time I do not wish to lay

stress on the completeness or adequacy of the classification. I do not profess to prove *à priori* that there are these practical first principles and no more. They have been taken merely empirically from observation of the moral reasoning of myself and other men, whether professed moralists or not: and though it seems to me improbable that I have overlooked any important phase or point of view, it is always possible that I may have done so.

On the other hand some readers may be expected to blame the list for excess rather than defect. They may have been taught to believe that "the common sense of mankind has in every age led to *two* seemingly opposite schemes of morality, that which makes *Virtue* and that which makes *Pleasure* the guide of human action:" and they may consider it a fault in my enumeration that it somewhat obliterates this fundamental distinction. Now perhaps no material error would be committed by stating the generally received methods of ethics as *three* in number and classifying all varieties under these three heads. For, as far as I am aware, there has been no systematic attempt to determine the rightness of conduct by considering its tendency to promote *universal* Perfection. And when Perfection or Excellence of the individual is spoken of as the ultimate end, what is most commonly meant is Moral Perfection, or at any rate this latter is taken to be its chief element: and when "Moral Perfection" has come to be defined, it has been found to mean "dispositions and habits tending to good action," the goodness being determined intuitively or by reference to common sense, and not by any special criterion derived from the notion of Perfection. And so far the method based upon this notion would coincide with a species of Intuitionism: and whatever divergence is introduced by including in the End other than moral excellences may seem not sufficiently important to constitute this a fundamentally distinct method. This point it is not particularly needful to determine. But against any identification or blending of Egoistic and Universalistic Hedonism, and even against any representation of their differences as secondary and subordinate, it seems very important to protest: as such a *rapprochement* encourages a serious misapprehension of both the historical and the philosophical relations of

these methods to the Intuitional or Common-Sense Morality. And the contrast between Egoism and Altruism is at any rate *primâ facie* one of the most fundamental that morality exhibits. No doubt it is a postulate of the practical Reason, that it must be consistent with itself: and hence we have a strong predisposition to reduce any two methods to unity. But it is just because this postulate has been the source of a large amount of bad reasoning in ethics, that it is a special object of the present work to avoid all hasty and premature reconciliations, and to exhibit fairly the divergence of the different methods without extenuation or exaggeration: and no divergence appears more obvious and glaring than that between the two systems not unfrequently confounded under the name of Utilitarianism.

At the same time it is not difficult to find reasons for this close union between principles and methods from one point of view so antagonistic. In the first place, the systems of Epicurus and Bentham are essentially similar in being both *dependent* systems; that is, in prescribing actions as means to an end distinct from, and lying outside the actions; and thus both consist of rules which are not absolute but relative, and only valid if they conduce to the end. Again, the ultimate end, or entity regarded as intrinsically good and desirable, is in both systems the same in quality, *i.e.* pleasure; or, more strictly, the maximum of pleasure attainable, pains being subtracted. Besides, it is of course to a great extent true that the conduct recommended by the one principle coincides with that inculcated by the other. Though it would seem to be only in an ideal polity that "self-interest well understood" leads to the perfect discharge of all social duties, still, in a tolerably well-ordered community it prompts to the fulfilment of most of them, unless under very exceptional circumstances. And, on the other hand, a sincere Benthamite may fairly hold that his own happiness is that portion of the universal good which it is most in his power to promote, and which therefore is most especially entrusted to his charge. And the practical blending of the two systems is sure to go beyond their theoretical coincidence. It is much easier for a man to move in a sort of diagonal between egoistic and universalistic hedonism, than to

be practically a consistent adherent of either. Few men are so completely selfish, whatever their theory of morals may be, as not occasionally to seek the general good of some smaller or larger community from natural sympathetic impulse unsupported by Epicurean calculation. And probably still fewer are so resolutely unselfish as never to find "all men's good" in their own with rather too ready conviction.

In spite of all this, the distinction between one's own happiness and that of people in general is so natural and obvious, and so continually forced upon our attention by the circumstances of life; that some other reason is required to explain the persistent confusion between the systems that respectively adopt either end as furnishing the right and reasonable standard for each individual's conduct. And such a reason is found in the theory of human action held by Bentham (and generally speaking by his disciples), which has been discussed in a previous chapter. Though ethically Epicureanism and Benthamism may be viewed as standing in polar opposition, psychologically Bentham is in fundamental agreement with Epicureans. He holds that a man ought to aim at the maximum felicity of men in general; but he holds, also, that he always does aim at what appears to him his own maximum felicity—that he cannot help doing this—that this is the way his volition inevitably acts. Bentham takes every opportunity of putting these two propositions with characteristic sharpness and clearness. "The greatest happiness of all those whose interest is in question is the only right and proper and universally desirable end of human action in every situation." But "in the general tenor of life, in every human breast, self-regard is predominant;" or, more explicitly, "on the occasion of every act he exercises, every human being is led to pursue that line of conduct which, according to his view of the case, taken by him at the moment, will be in the highest degree contributory to his own greatest happiness, whatsoever be the effect of it in relation to the happiness of other similar beings, any or all of them taken together." He goes on to refer those who doubt to the "existence of the human species as being itself a proof, and a conclusive one."

Here, if self-interest be not the "right and proper end of

action[1]," it is at any rate not wrong or improper, because it is inevitable. If Bentham is asked, "Why then do you inveigh (as you certainly do with much bitterness and emphasis) against lawyers and statesmen who seek their own interest when it unfortunately happens to diverge from the public interest?" his answer is ready and clear: 'I do so with a view of removing the divergence; by my own disapprobation and the disapprobation of all whom I can persuade to sympathize with me, I would supply the force that is wanting to turn the wills of these public servants in the direction of public duty.' If he is asked again, "But when you concern yourself about the public good, and call it the right and proper end of action, do not you recognise a principle of duty, obedience to which you prefer to your own pleasure?" he answers unhesitatingly, 'No, I concern myself about the public good, *because in me selfishness has taken the form of public spirit*, and when I call it the proper end, I mean that I wish all other men to take it for such, with a view to its attainment, with which the attainment of my own greatest happiness is bound up.'

There is, therefore, in Bentham's mind no confusion and no logical connexion between his psychological generalization and his ethical assumption. But it has been so common among moralists of all schools to identify the natural and the ideal, and to argue from what men universally or normally do to what they ought to do, that it is not surprising that a Benthamite should be thought to approve of the egoism which he accepts as inevitable, and in some way to base upon it his universalistic hedonism. And we find that the latest expositor of utilitarianism, J. S. Mill, does try to establish a logical connexion between the psychological and ethical principles, which he holds in common with Bentham, and to convince his readers that because each man naturally seeks his own happiness, therefore he ought to seek the happiness of other people[2].

[1] As far as I am aware, this term is never applied to it in works written by Bentham himself. In the *Deontology*, and elsewhere where the composition is due to Dumont, we find a loose and vague combination of Egoistic and Universalistic Hedonism, which it is impossible to attribute to so exact and coherent a thinker as Bentham.

[2] We shall have occasion to consider Mill's argument on this point in a subsequent chapter. Cf. *post*, Book III. c. 13.

Nevertheless, it can hardly be denied that the affinity between Utilitarianism and Intuitionism, if we consider not the principles of the methods but their practical results, is really much greater than that between the two forms of Hedonism. Many moralists who have maintained as practically valid the judgments of right and wrong which the Common Sense of mankind seems intuitively to enunciate, have yet regarded Happiness as an end to which the rules of morality were means. I do not mean merely that they believed happiness to be annexed as a Divine reward to the observance of these rules: but that they believed such observance by any individual to tend naturally to the happiness of others; and that the rules had been implanted by Nature or revealed by God to that end. It would follow that, though I am bound to take, as *my* ultimate standard in acting, conformity to a rule which is for me absolute; still the Divine and (we may say) *intrinsic* reason for the rule laid down would be Utilitarian. On this view, the *method* of Utilitarianism is certainly rejected: the connexion between right action and happiness is not ascertained by a process of reasoning. But we can hardly say that the Utilitarian principle is rejected: rather the limitations of the human reason are supposed to prevent it from apprehending adequately the real connexion between the true principle and the right rules of conduct. This connexion, however, has always been to some extent visible to and recognised by all reflective persons. Indeed so clear is it that in most cases the observance of the commonly received moral rules tends to render human life tranquil and happy, that even moralists (as Whewell) who are most strongly opposed to Utilitarianism have, in attempting to exhibit the "necessity" of moral rules, been led to dwell on utilitarian considerations.

And during the first period of ethical controversy in modern England, after the audacious enunciation of Egoism by Hobbes had roused in real earnest the search for a philosophical basis of morality, Utilitarianism appears in friendly alliance with Intuitionism. It was not to supersede but to support the morality of Common Sense, against the dangerous innovations of Hobbes, that Cumberland declared "the common good of all Rationals" to be the end to which moral rules were the means. We find

him quoted with approval by Clarke, who is commonly taken to represent Intuitionism in an extreme form. Nor does Shaftesbury, in introducing the theory of a "moral sense," seem to have dreamt that it could ever impel us to actions not clearly conducive to the Good of the Whole: and his disciple Hutcheson expressly identified its promptings with those of Benevolence. Butler seems to have been the first who distinctly pointed out the occasional discrepancy between the apparent well-being of society and Virtue as commonly understood[1]. When Hume presented Utilitarianism as a mode of explaining current morality, it was seen or suspected to have a destructive tendency. But it was not till Bentham's time that it was offered as a method for determining conduct, absolutely complete in itself: the conclusions of which were to overrule all traditional precepts and supersede all existing sentiments. And even this complete and final antagonism relates rather to theory and method than to practical results: indeed the discrepancy in results between Utilitarianism and Common Sense has been rather extenuated than exaggerated by most utilitarians. The practical conflict is so essentially between Egoism and Altruism, that the sense of this continually tends to draw together Utilitarianism and Intuitionism into their old alliance. Indeed from a practical point of view Egoism and Utilitarianism may fairly be regarded as extremes between which the Common-Sense morality is a kind of *media via*. For this latter is commonly thought to leave a man free to pursue his own happiness under certain definite limits and conditions: whereas the "greatest happiness of the greatest number" seems to self-love a principle more oppressive from the comprehensive, indefinite, and unceasing character of its exactions. And thus, as Mill remarks, Utilitarianism is sometimes attacked from two precisely opposite sides: from a confusion with Egoistic Hedonism it is called base and grovelling: while at the same time it is more plausibly charged with setting up too high a standard of

[1] I think we can trace a change in Butler's view on this point; if we compare the first of his Sermons on Human Nature with the Dissertation on Virtue which forms an appendix to the *Analogy*. Certainly in the former treatise he does not notice, any more than Shaftesbury and Hutcheson, any actual or possible want of harmony between Conscience and Rational Benevolence.

unselfishness and making exaggerated demands on human nature.

A good deal remains to be said, in order to make the principle and method of Utilitarianism perfectly clear and explicit: but it seems best to defer this till we come to the investigation of its details. It will be convenient to take this as the final stage of our examination of methods. For on the one hand it is simpler that the discussion of Egoistic Hedonism should precede that of Universalistic: and on the other, it seems desirable that we should obtain in as exact a form as possible the enunciations of Intuitive Morality, before we compare these with the results of the more doubtful and difficult calculations of utilitarian consequences.

In the remaining chapters of this book I shall endeavour to define more clearly the nature and relations of the other two methods, before proceeding to the fuller examination of them, with which we shall be occupied in Books II. and III.

CHAPTER VII.

EGOISM AND SELF-LOVE.

§ 1. In the preceding chapter I have used the term "Egoism," as others have done, to denote a system which prescribes actions as means to the end of the individual's happiness. The ruling motive in such a system is commonly said to be "self-love." But both terms admit of other interpretations, which it will be well to distinguish and set aside before proceeding further, as the ambiguous meaning of "egoism" and "self-love" has been a frequent source of confusion in ethical discussion.

I may illustrate this by a reference to the doctrines of Hobbes. His method is naturally and quite properly called egoistic, but it is not throughout, strictly speaking, hedonistic. In fact his deviations from pure Hedonism are considerable: and it is of some interest to notice them, as they are essential characteristics of his system, which in its original plan and purpose, (though not perhaps in its effect upon mankind,) was the reverse of destructive. His aim was to promulgate philosophical principles of conduct upon which the social order might firmly rest, and escape the storms and convulsions with which it seemed to be menaced from the vagaries of the unenlightened conscience. Now pure egoistic hedonism, as I shall presently shew, cannot furnish a solid basis for such social construction: and even such imperfect constructiveness as Hobbism attained is only managed by means of qualifications and assumptions alien to pure hedonism. For example, it is not "self-love" in Butler's sense—the impulse which aims at the

individual's pleasure—but "self-preservation," which determines the first of those precepts of rational egoism which he calls "Laws of Nature." It is true that his psychological theory that "pleasure helpeth vital actions" made him to some extent blend the two notions: for so by aiming at pleasure a man would seek to increase if not strictly to preserve his vitality. Still in the development of his system we often find that it is Preservation rather than Pleasure that he has in view. I do not mean merely that he considers social rules to be enjoined by prudence on the individual as "articles of peace:" for peace is a means to the end of Pleasure as well as of Preservation. But in determining the very important question, when the same prudence or egoistic reason will prompt the individual *not* to conform to his articles of peace, he decides that such non-conformity is justifiable at the point at which submission would tend to interfere not with his pleasure, but with his life and freedom of action; "when death or imprisonment are threatened" by society.

Again in Spinoza's view the principle of rational action is necessarily egoistic, and is (as with Hobbes) the impulse of self preservation. The individual mind, says Spinoza, like everything else, strives so far as it is able to continue in its state of being: indeed this effort is its very essence. It is true that this impulse cannot be distinguished from the desire of pleasure: because pleasure or joy is "a passion in which the soul passes to higher perfection." Still it is not at Pleasure that the impulse primarily aims, but at Perfection or Reality: as we should now say, at Self-development. Of this, according to Spinoza, the highest form consists in a clear comprehension of all things in their necessary order as modifications of the one Divine Being, and that willing acceptance of all which springs from this comprehension, and which Spinoza calls the "intellectual love of God." In this state the mind is purely active, without any admixture of passion or passivity: and thus its essential nature is realized or actualized to the greatest possible degree.

We perceive that this is the notion of self-realization as defined not only *by* but *for* a philosopher: and that it would mean something quite different in the case of a man of action

—such, for example, as the reflective dramatist of Germany introduces exclaiming:

> Ich kann mich nicht
> Wie so ein Wortheld, so ein Tugend-Schwätzer
> An meinem Willen wärmen, und Gedanken.....
> Wenn ich nicht wirke mehr, bin ich vernichtet[1].

The artist again often contemplates his essentially different manner of life under the same notion. Nay, even the philosopher, if his thought takes a more distinctly ethical turn than Spinoza's, will include moral action as well as metaphysical contemplation in his conception of self-development; and hold that true self-love prompts us to obey the moral rules laid down by the governing principle within us, as in such obedience we shall be realizing our truest self[2].

We see, in short, that the term Egoism, as it merely implies that some reference to self is made in laying down first principles of conduct, does not really indicate in any way the substance of such principles. For all our impulses, high and low, sensual and moral alike, are so far similarly related to self, that—except when two or more impulses come into conscious conflict—we identify ourselves with each as it arises. Thus self-consciousness may be prominent in yielding to any impulse: and egoism, in so far as it merely implies such prominence, is a notion equally applicable to all varieties of external behaviour, and a common form into which any moral system may be thrown.

It may be said, however, that we do not, properly speaking, "develope" or "realize" self by yielding to the impulse which happens to be naturally predominant in us; but by exercising, each in its due place and proper degree, all the different faculties and capacities, propensities and susceptibilities, of which our nature is made up: as it is the sum or complex of these which constitutes the self in each of us. But here there is an important ambiguity. What do we mean by "due proportion and proper degree"? These terms may imply an ideal balance and composition of mental elements, into conformity with which the individual mind has to be trained, by

[1] Schiller's *Wallenstein*.

[2] Cf. Aristotle, *Ethics*, Book IX. c. 8.

restraining some of its natural impulses and strengthening others. Or they may merely refer to the natural combination and proportion of tendencies in the character of each: to this, it may be meant, we ought to adapt as far as possible the circumstances in which we place ourselves and the functions which we choose to exercise: in order that we may "be ourselves," "live our own life," &c. But it does not seem that "self-development" in this latter sense is ever put forward as an absolute end, but as a means to happiness: for supposing a man to be born with dispositions tending to his own unhappiness, no one would recommend him to develope these as fully as possible, instead of modifying or subduing them in some way: but it is thought that the best way of seeking happiness is to give free play to one's nature. This view we will hereafter consider more fully. In the former interpretation Self-development (it might perhaps be better termed Self-culture) implies the principle of taking the perfection of the individual as the proper ultimate end of action. Now as the notion of Perfection or Excellence is quite distinct from that of Happiness, this principle leads to a method of determining right conduct *primâ facie* different from the Hedonistic method which is more commonly called Egoism. The ends at which the two methods aim are different, although they may turn out to be inseparably connected. Indeed in so far as Virtue is the prominent element of human Perfection, the former kind of Egoism will coincide with what we have called Intuitionism.

Similarly, we must discard a common account of Egoism which describes its end or first principle as the "good" of the individual: for the term "good" really contains undeveloped (but therefore unreconciled) all possible views of the ultimate end of rational conduct. Indeed it may be said that Egoism in this sense was assumed in the whole ethical controversy of ancient Greece. For when men inquired, "What is the Supreme Good?" they meant the supreme good for each individual inquirer, and assumed that this was for him the right and proper end of action. But the question still remained open whether it was Pleasure or Virtue, or anything else, that was intrinsically Good or the Highest Good. Nor is the ambiguity removed if we follow Aristotle in confining our attention to the

Good attainable in human life, and call this Εὐδαιμονία, Well-being. For we may still argue with the Stoics, that virtuous or excellent actions and not pleasures are the elements of which true human Well-being is composed. Indeed Aristotle himself adopts this view, and determines the details of εὐδαιμονία accordingly: though he does not, with the Stoics, regard the pursuit of Virtue and that of Pleasure as competing alternatives, holding rather that the "best pleasure" is an inseparable concomitant of the most excellent action. Similarly some modern utilitarians prefer to state as their ultimate end "greatest Good" rather than "greatest Happiness," because the former notion naturally includes Pleasure in indefinite synthesis with whatever else is commonly reckoned desirable. And even the term Happiness is not quite clear. It seems to be commonly used in Bentham's way as convertible with Pleasure: or rather as denoting that of which the elements are pleasures. Still it is not quite certain that by Happiness we always understand this and nothing else: so that even this term may involve us in verbal disputes and misunderstandings[1].

§ 2. To be clear, then, we must particularize as the object of self-love, and End of what (for distinctness' sake) I have called Egoistic Hedonism, a certain state or quality of the conscious-

[1] Aristotle's selection of εὐδαιμονία to denote what he elsewhere calls "Human" or "Practicable" good, and still more the fact that, after all, we have no better rendering for εὐδαιμονία than "Happiness" or "Felicity," has caused his whole system to be misunderstood: so that he is often thought to have taught a species of Hedonism. We may conjecture that it was not without doing some violence to common usage that Aristotle could bring his readers to understand by εὐδαιμονία that kind of Well-being that consists of Well-doing, and of which pleasure is not the element but the inseparable concomitant: and if the term "happiness" is used, it is almost impossible for the English reader to seize Aristotle's exact view.

Thus it may be observed that when Stewart (*Philosophy of the Active and Moral Powers*, Book II. c. 2) says that "by many of the best of the ancient moralists our sense of duty was considered as resolvable into self-love, and the whole of ethics was reduced to this question . . . What is most conducive on the whole to our happiness?" the remark, if not exactly false, is certain to mislead his readers. For Stewart always uses "happiness," as most English writers do, as equivalent to "sum of pleasures:" and he uses "self-love," as most exact writers after Butler have done, to denote the impulse which prompts us to seek the greatest amount of such pleasure attainable.

ness of the agent which we call Pleasure or Satisfaction; or rather the sum and series of such states, to denote which, without violation of usage, we may take the terms Happiness or Felicity. Still even so we have not quite got rid of ambiguity: for it may still be maintained that only certain kinds of pleasure are to be sought, and not others. And this view has actually been held by some who have professed to take Pleasure as the ultimate end and standard of right conduct. But reflection will shew that by the admission of this qualification the method might practically be metamorphosed into any other, and can no longer be appropriately called Hedonism. One has only to say (e. g.) that no other pleasures are worth seeking but those that attend the practice of Virtue, and then this latter and not Pleasure will become the notion practically important for determining our conduct, so that our method will be indistinguishable from Intuitionism. But Hedonism, strictly understood, should obviously be a method that aims at pleasure as pleasure and nothing else; and so at pleasure generally, not any particular kind of pleasure. And Self-love, as understood by Butler and other English moralists after him, is similarly an impulse towards pleasure generally, however obtained. In fact, it is upon this generality that the supremacy or authority attached to it in Butler's system, and the "rationality" which Stewart attributes to it, are founded. For since satisfaction or pleasure of some kind results from gratifying any impulse; when antagonistic impulses compete for the determination of the Will, Self-love prompts us to compare the pleasures which we foresee will respectively attend their gratification, and when we have ascertained which pleasure is the greatest, adds its weight to the corresponding impulse. It is thus called into play whenever impulses conflict, and is therefore naturally regulative and directive (as Butler argues) of other impulses. As far, then, as Self-love goes, we are not supposed to consider anything except the *amount* of pleasure or satisfaction: or, to use Bentham's forcible illustration, "quantity of pleasure being equal, push-pin is as good as poetry."

This position, however, seems to many offensively paradoxical; and consequently an eminent disciple of Bentham[1]

[1] J. S. Mill.

has thought it desirable to abandon it and to take into account differences in quality among pleasures as well as differences in degree. Now here we may observe, first, that it is quite consistent with the view quoted as Bentham's, to describe some kinds of pleasure as inferior in quality to others, if by "a pleasure" we mean (as is often meant) a whole state of consciousness which is only partly pleasurable; and still more if we take into view subsequent states causally connected with this. For many pleasures are not free from pain even while enjoyed: and many more have painful consequences. These are, in Bentham's phrase, "impure:" and as the pain has to be set off against the pleasure, it is in accordance with strictly quantitative measurement of pleasure to call them inferior in kind. And again, we must be careful not to confound intensity of *pleasure* with intensity of *sensation:* as a pleasant feeling may be strong and absorbing, and yet not so pleasant as another that is more subtle and delicate. With these explanations, it seems to me that in order to develope consistently the method that takes pleasure as the sole ultimate end of rational conduct, Bentham's proposition must be accepted, and all *qualitative* comparison of pleasures must really resolve itself into quantitative. All pleasures are understood to be so called because they have a common property of pleasantness, and may therefore be compared in respect of this common property. If, then, what we are seeking is pleasure as such, and pleasure alone, we must evidently always prefer the more pleasant pleasure to the less pleasant: no other choice seems reasonable, unless we are aiming at something besides pleasure. And often when we say that one kind of pleasure is better than another—as (e. g.) that the pleasures of reciprocated affections are superior in quality to the pleasures of gratified appetite—we mean that they are more pleasant. No doubt we may mean something else: we may mean, for instance, that they are nobler and more elevated, although less pleasant. But thus we are clearly introducing a non-hedonistic ground of preference: and if this is held to be a valid reason for choosing the less pleasure rather than the greater, the method adopted can no longer be properly called Hedonism. In fact, in the case just supposed, we might fairly call the method Intuitionism in the garb of Hedonism. For there is

but the slightest formal, and no substantial, difference between a method that aims at the most elevated and refined activities —or realization and development of the most elevated faculties and capacities—and a method that aims at the most elevated pleasures[1].

To sum up, Egoism, if we merely understand by it a method that aims at Self-realization, seems to be a form into which almost any ethical system may be thrown, without modifying its essential characteristics. And even when further defined as Egoistic Hedonism, it becomes indistinguishable from some phase of Intuitionism if qualitative superiority of pleasures is admitted as distinct from and overruling quantitative. There remains then Pure or Quantitative Egoistic Hedonism, which, as a method essentially distinct from all others and widely maintained to be rational, seems to deserve a detailed examination. And this seems to be what is commonly intended by the vaguer terms egoism, egoistic: and therefore I shall allow myself to use these terms in this more precise signification.

[1] Here again we may turn for illustration to the Aristotelian Ethics. For we have two editions of this system, in one of which we are told that the end of action is the sum of the best possible *ἐνεργείαι* (exercises of faculties), and at the same time that the best pleasure (*ἡδονή*) always attends the best *ἐνεργεία*: while in the other *ἐνεργεία* is identified with *ἡδονή*, and therefore the end assumes a hedonistic aspect. In fact, on one view, Aristotle's system may be called a *reconciliation* of Hedonism and Intuitionism, yet so that the method of determining right conduct is purely intuitional: that is, if we make the assumption that the *greatest* pleasure—it is hard to say whether Aristotle distinguishes this from *best*—attends the *best* exercise of faculty. If, on the other hand, we decline to make this assumption, his method exhibits exactly the boundary line at which Intuitionism meets Hedonism, but still must be regarded as a phase of the former.

CHAPTER VIII.

INTUITIONISM.

§ 1. We have used the terms "Intuitional" to denote the method which recognises rightness[1] as a quality inherent in actions independently of their conduciveness to any end. With this method we have agreed to associate that which aims at the Perfection of the individual as the ultimate end: because of this Perfection moral excellences have commonly been regarded as at least the chief constituent: and these moral excellences can only be defined as dispositions and habits that tend to right or virtuous action, the rightness or virtuousness being intuitively ascertained. There are, no doubt, important differences between this method and what is commonly known as Intuitive Morality: but their general coincidence may perhaps justify us in regarding the former as merely a phase or variety of the latter.

When we say that Right Conduct is known by Intuition, we are understood to mean that it is ascertained by simply "looking at" the actions themselves, without considering their consequences. It may be said, however, that no morality ever existed which did not consider consequences.

[1] I may remind the reader that I use the terms "right" and "reasonable," and the equivalent phrase "what ought to be" [done or aimed at], to express a notion so fundamental that it does not seem possible to define it in the ordinary way: but only in the manner in which I have tried to make it clear in c. 1 of this book, by distinguishing it from other notions with which it is liable to be confounded.

Prudence or Forethought has always been reckoned a virtue: and all modern lists of Virtues have included Benevolence, which aims generally at the happiness of others, and therefore necessarily takes into consideration even remote effects of actions. It may be said, too, that it is difficult to draw the line between an act and its consequences: as the effects which follow each of our volitions form a continuous series stretching to infinity, and we intend equally whichever of these at the moment of volition we foresee to be probable. However the common notions of different kinds of actions do practically draw a line between the results included in the notion and regarded as forming part of the act, and those considered as consequences. For example, in speaking truth to a jury, I may foresee that my words, operating along with other statements and indications, will lead them to a wrong conclusion as to the guilt or innocence of the accused, nearly as certainly as I foresee that they will produce a right impression as to the particular matter of fact to which I am testifying. Still we commonly consider the latter foresight or intention to determine the nature of the act as an act of veracity, while the former merely relates to a consequence. And the most strictly Intuitional systems do not bid us disregard what are considered as consequences *generally*, but only in respect of certain determinate classes of actions (as Truth-speaking) where the general notions of the acts indicate clearly enough what events are to be included, and what excluded.

According to the common view, which regards Intuitionism and Hedonism as the only possible alternatives, the only consequences of actions which are ethically important are pleasures and pains. It is, however, quite conceivable that men should judge remote as well as immediate events to be in themselves desirable, without considering them in relation to the feelings of sentient beings. Indeed we not unfrequently find men who, while they judge the conduct of others and shape their own by a consideration of remote effects, yet seem to regard not pleasures and pains but some other kind of effects as intrinsically and ultimately desirable: such as the promotion of Art or Knowledge, generally or in some particular department. But probably most such men, if they undertook to

shew the *reasonableness* of their judgment, would admit the necessity of exhibiting the tendency of such effects either to increase the Happiness of sentient beings, or to bring mankind nearer to Perfection—or perhaps, to raise the world as a whole into a higher state of existence. One or other of these latter views seems at least latent in the thought of all persons, who, while they repudiate Hedonism on the one hand, are still not satisfied with a method which prescribes conformity to certain rules as absolutely and ultimately reasonable. And therefore I have included Perfection of Mankind or of the world among the ends which claim to be rational. The relation of the method based upon the assumption of this end to Intuitive Morality will be more conveniently discussed at a later period[1].

Meanwhile by Intuitionism we are to understand a method which to a certain extent—indeed, in so far as it is clearly distinguished from hedonistic methods—prescribes certain actions to be done without regard to their consequences: the line between "act" and "consequences" being drawn in each case by a proper definition of the general term denoting the action.

Of this method there are, however, many different forms, either expressly developed in the treatises of moralists or discoverable as implicit in the moral reasoning of ordinary men, which it is a matter of some delicacy to distinguish and arrange. The differences may be classed, I think, under three heads. There are, first, differences of method strictly speaking, according as that is held to be deductive or inductive, and the propositions from which we start in reasoning universal or particular. Again, men have used different notions to represent the special object of intuition, the quality that is intuitively apprehended in actions by the moral faculty. For this may be either (1) the rightness of actions and the moral obligation to perform them, or (2) their goodness or (3) their moral beauty, in so far as this requires to be distinguished from goodness. Thirdly, there seem to be different views as to the ultimate reason for actually doing what is intuitively ascertained to be right. The common view, indeed, is that which has already been given, that in this intuition itself is contained the final

[1] Cf. *post*, Bk. III. c. 14.

reason for obeying it: it is in fact a perception of what is intrinsically reasonable to be done. On this view no further reason ought to be demanded or given, and the question, "Why ought I to do what is right?" seems just as superfluous as the question, "Why should I believe what is true?" Still many persons, while relying entirely on their moral intuitions for practical guidance, are yet dissatisfied with this account, and seek out some further notion by the aid of which obedience to the moral faculty may be made to appear more undeniably reasonable. Of the different general conceptions which have been thus put forward as the real basis of Intuitive or Common Sense morality, we have already had occasion to notice the most important, viz. "conformity to the Divine Will," or "to Nature" (in so far as this can be distinguished from the former), and "Self-realization," the End of what may be called Moral Egoism. The adoption of any such conception as fundamental does not necessarily lead to any deviation in details from the commonly received rules and principles; but the intrinsic vagueness of these notions seems to render such deviations very probable. A man who now regards strictly moral conduct as most natural or the best expression of his true will, may be easily led to take a different view of nature or his real self, and so to deviate indefinitely from the commonly received code of morality. Still, we cannot, I think, systematize any such deviations as logically following from the acceptance of either principle.

§ 2. We are more concerned to study carefully the differences in the current views of what may be called the Logic of Intuitional Ethics. Here what was said above may have somewhat surprised the reader, as he will have frequently heard "intuitive" contrasted with "inductive" morality, the latter being treated as synonymous with hedonism of some kind. Another pair of terms used in the same opposition are "*à priori*" and "*à posteriori*:" and in this way a certain presumption is raised against "Intuitionism," as an "*à posteriori*" method is thought to be most in harmony with the habits and tendencies of modern science. Now there is a rough appropriateness in the common use of these terms: and therefore I have not hesitated to adopt Intuitionism as a title:

but the antithesis is imperfect, and generally involves a curious confusion of thought. For what the "inductive" moralist professes to know *à posteriori*, by induction from experience, is commonly not the same thing as what the intuitive moralist professes to know by intuition. In the former case it is the conduciveness to pleasure of certain kinds of action that is methodically ascertained: in the latter case, their rightness: there is therefore no proper opposition. If Hedonism presents itself as a system of Ethics, and claims to give practical guidance, this can only be in virtue of the principle "that pleasure is"—to use Bentham's phrase—"the only right and proper end of human action." It is true that this principle is not often explicitly stated: but it is always necessarily implied, and it cannot be known by induction from experience. Experience can at most tell us that all men always do seek pleasure (that it does not support this conclusion I have already tried to shew): it cannot tell us that any one ought to seek it.

Again—and this leads us back to the subject now under discussion—a moralist may hold the rightness of actions to be cognizable apart from the pleasure produced by them, and yet his method may be properly called Inductive. He may hold that it is always this or that individual action, which is in the first place apprehended to be right: and that all valid general propositions in ethics are obtained by generalization from such particular judgments.

When Socrates is said by Aristotle to have applied inductive reasoning to ethical questions, it is this kind of induction which is meant. He discovered, as we are told, the latent ignorance of himself and other men: that is, that they used general terms confidently, without being able when called upon to explain the meaning of those terms. His plan for remedying this ignorance was to obtain, or work towards, the true definition of each term, by examining and comparing different instances of its application. Thus the definition of Justice would be sought by comparing different particular actions intuitively recognised as just, and framing a general proposition that would harmonize with all these particular intuitions[1].

[1] It must however be remembered that Aristotle regarded the general

Again the popular view of Conscience seems—at least *primâ facie*—to point to such a method. We most commonly think of the dictates of conscience as relating to particular actions: and when a man is bidden, in any particular case, to "trust to his conscience," it commonly seems to be meant that he should exercise a faculty of judging morally this particular case without reference to general rules, and even in opposition to conclusions obtained by systematic deduction from such rules. And in this way the aversion of the unphilosophic conscientious man to "Casuistry" may be justified: for if the particular case can be satisfactorily settled by conscience without reference to general rules, "Casuistry," which consists in the application of general rules to particular cases, is clearly superfluous. But then, on this view, we shall have no practical need of any such general rules, or of a science of Ethics at all. We may of course form general propositions by induction from these particular conscientious judgments, and arrange them systematically: but any interest which such a system may have will be purely speculative. And this accounts for the indifference or hostility to systematic morality shewn by some conscientious persons. For they feel that they can at any rate do without it: and they fear that the cultivation of it may place the mind in a wrong attitude in relation to practice, and prove rather unfavourable than otherwise to the proper development of the practically important faculty by which we pass particular moral judgments.

This view may be called ultra-intuitional, as it recognises simple immediate intuitions alone and rejects all modes of reasoning to moral conclusions. But it may equally well be called ultra-empirical, as it emphasizes the authority of particular moral experiences in comparison with universal rules or axioms. This then we may describe as one phase or variety of the Intuitional method, involving really a negation of method, and excluding what is more strictly called Reason[1] from moral decisions.

proposition obtained by induction as really more certain (and in a higher sense knowledge), than the particulars through which the mind is led up to it: and that it is with this meaning that he—quite correctly as far as we know—characterizes the procedure of Socrates as inductive.

[1] i.e. the faculty of apprehending universal truth. Cf. *ante*, c. 3, § 1.

§ 3. But though probably all moral agents have experience of such particular intuitions, and though they constitute a great part of the moral phenomena of most minds, comparatively few are so thoroughly satisfied with them, as not to demand some more certain moral knowledge, even for practical purposes. And indeed, even when the decision of the moral faculty is felt to relate primarily to some particular action, we cannot really exclude generality from the notion of the act thus judged to be right. The belief that what I ought to do here and now would be right for all persons in precisely similar circumstances seems at least latent in all moral consciousness[1]: hence the quality of rightness must be dependent upon certain general characteristics of the action, agent, and circumstances: and the moral truth apprehended will be intrinsically universal, though particular in our first apprehension of it. Again, these particular intuitions do not, to reflective persons, present themselves as quite indubitable and irrefragable. Frequently when they have put the ethical question to themselves with all sincerity, they are not conscious of clear immediate insight in respect of it. Again, when we compare the utterances of our conscience at different times, we find it difficult to make them consistent: the same conduct will wear a different aspect at one time from that which it wore at another, although our perception of its circumstances and conditions remains unchanged. Thirdly, we become aware that the intuitions of different minds, to all appearance equally competent to judge, frequently conflict: one condemns what another approves. In this way serious doubts are aroused as to the validity of each man's moral perceptions: and we endeavour to set these doubts at rest by appealing to general rules, more immutable, and resting on a firmer basis of common consent, than such particular intuitions.

And in fact, though the view of conscience before discussed is one which much popular language seems to suggest, it is not that which Christian and other moralists have usually given. They have rather represented the process of conscience as analogous to one of jural reasoning, such as is conducted in a Court of Law. Here we have always a system of universal

[1] *Cf. ante*, c. 1, § 3, and Book III. c. 1, § 2.

rules given, and any particular action has to be brought under one of these rules before it can be pronounced lawful or unlawful. Now the rules of positive law are not discoverable by the individual's reason: this may teach him that law ought to be obeyed, but what law is must be communicated to him from some external authority. And this is not unfrequently the case with the conscientious reasoning of ordinary persons: they have a genuine impulse to conform to the right rules of conduct, but they are not conscious of seeing for themselves what these are: they have to inquire that of their priest, or their sacred books, or more often the common opinion of the society to which they belong. But so far as this is the case we cannot call their morality Intuitional. They follow rules generally received, not intuitively apprehended. Still no doubt other persons (or perhaps all to some extent) do seem to see for themselves the truth[1] and bindingness of all or most of these current rules. Their reception by common consent is still an argument for their validity: but only as supporting the individual's intuition, not as a substitute for it or as superseding it.

Here then we have a second Intuitional Method: of which the fundamental assumption is that we can discern general rules with really clear and finally valid intuition. Such general rules are sometimes called moral axioms, and compared to the First Principles of Geometry. They are held to be implicit in the moral reasoning of ordinary men, who are thought to apprehend them adequately for most practical purposes, and to be able to enunciate them roughly. But to state them with proper precision seems to require a power of contemplating clearly and steadily abstract moral notions, which is only obtained by special cultivation. The moralist's function then is to do this, and to arrange them as systematically as possible, and by proper definitions and explanations to remove vagueness and prevent conflict. It is such a system as this which seems to be generally intended when Intuitive or *à priori* morality is mentioned, and which will chiefly occupy us in Book III.

However there still remain minds to which the Morality

[1] It should be borne in mind that the ideas of truth and falsehood are only applicable to Rules, when they are changed from the imperative mood ("Do X") into the indicative ("X ought to be done").

of Common Sense, even when made as precise and orderly as possible, is still not satisfactory as a system, although they have no disposition to question its general authority. In the first place, even if we do not doubt the validity of these rules, it is difficult to accept them, as they are empirically obtained by reflection on common sense, for scientific first principles. Even if they can be so defined as perfectly to fit together and cover the whole field of human conduct, without coming into conflict and without leaving any questions unanswered: still this harmony wears an accidental aspect. Without being disposed to deny that these *are* the true rules, we yet seem to require some deeper explanation why they are so: some deeper conception or principle by means of which we may organize them into a truly rational system.

But further, in reflecting on these rules, all the doubts recur that were just now noticed in respect of the particular dictates of conscience. A man's intuition of moral truth, even if we only contemplate each rule taken separately, is rarely so certain as his intuition of geometrical truth: and there are numerous cases where moral rules *primâ facie* conflict, and it seems doubtful how far this conflict can be removed by merely defining the rules themselves, without penetrating to any deeper principle. And if we succeed in removing this conflict to our satisfaction, and in making our own moral system harmonious, still we shall find important discrepancies between it and the moral systems of other ages and countries. Nay more, in proportion as we introduce precision into our moral rules, so as to get rid of ambiguity and guard against the possibility of conflict, we seem gradually to lose the support which they at first derived from the general consent of mankind: as this universal agreement can only be obtained by keeping them vague and undefined. Here we have another reason why "Casuistry" comes to be regarded with suspicion: for the rules in their vague form are sufficient for practical purposes, while Casuistry inevitably attempts to make them precise, and in so doing is found to diminish their established certainty and to weaken their hold on the mind.

And thus from the two impulses which together have been the source of all philosophic effort (as distinct from mere curi-

osity), the desire of completer synthesis, and the desire of greater certainty, springs a third species or phase of Intuitionism. This, while accepting the morality of common sense as in the main sound, still attempts to find for it a philosophic basis which it does not itself offer: to get one or more principles more absolutely and undeniably true and evident, from which the current rules might be deduced, either just as they are commonly received or with slight modifications and rectifications.

§ 4. The three kinds of Intuitionism just described seem to exhibit three stages in the scientific development of Intuitive Morality: they might be termed respectively Perceptional or Instinctive, Dogmatic, and Rational or Philosophical. The first of these, as was said, is, if taken strictly by itself, a complete negation of method, and so offers nothing to be investigated. The second method proceeds by reflection upon common sense, and therefore can only deviate from common opinion in its results very slightly, where common opinion is manifestly confused and obscure. The third obviously admits of great variation: in fact as yet I have presented it only as a problem, of which it is impossible to foresee how many solutions may be attempted: but it does not seem desirable to investigate it further at present, as it will be more satisfactorily studied after examining in detail the morality of common sense.

It must not be thought that these three modes are sharply distinguished in the moral reasoning of ordinary men: but then no more is Intuitionism of any sort sharply distinguished from either species of Hedonism. A loose combination or confusion of methods is the most common type of actual moral reasoning. Probably most moral men believe that their instinct in any case will guide them pretty right, but also that there are general rules for determining right action, those that prescribe the several virtues known as such: and that probably for these again a philosophical explanation may be found, deducing them from a smaller number of fundamental principles. Still for systematic direction of conduct, we require to know on what judgments we may rely as ultimately valid.

Nor, again, have professional moralists of the Intuitional school always made clear the methodical aspect of their system.

For example, Dugald Stewart uses the term "perception" to denote the immediate operation of the moral faculty; which certainly suggests that it judges primarily of the individual action, as "perception" is by metaphysicians chiefly used to denote cognition of an individual thing or quality. At the same time, in describing what is thus perceived, he always seems to have in view general rules or notions: and he speaks of moral distinctions as apprehended by the Reason.

Still we can tolerably well distinguish among English ethical writers those who have been Intuitionists of the third or philosophical variety, from those who have confined themselves to the definition and arrangement of the morality of Common Sense. And we find that the distinction corresponds in the main to a difference of periods: and that—what perhaps we should hardly have expected—the more philosophical school is the earlier. The explanation of this may be partly found by referring to the doctrines in antagonism to which, in the respective periods, the Intuitional method asserted and developed itself. In the first period all orthodox moralists were occupied in refuting Hobbism. But this system, though based on Materialism and Egoism, was yet, as I have said, intended as ethically constructive. Accepting in the main the commonly received rules of social morality, it explained them as the conditions of peaceful existence which enlightened self-interest directed each individual to obey; provided only the social order to which they belonged was not merely ideal, but made actual by a strong government. Now no doubt this view renders the theoretical basis of duty seriously unstable, as depending upon the arbitrary commands of an actual government: still, assuming a decently good government, Hobbism may claim to at once explain and establish, instead of undermining, the morality of Common Sense. And therefore, though some of Hobbes' antagonists (as Cudworth) contented themselves with simply reaffirming the absoluteness of morality, the more thoughtful felt that system must be met by system and explanation by explanation, and that they must penetrate beyond the dogmas of common sense to some more irrefragable certainty. And so, while Cumberland found this deeper basis in the notion of "the common good of all Rationals" as an ulti-

mate end, Clarke sought to exhibit the more fundamental of the received rules as axioms of perfect self-evidence, necessarily forced upon the mind in contemplating human beings and their relations. Clarke's results, however, were not satisfactory: the more *bizarre* attempt of Wollaston in the same direction was a more complete failure: the attempt to exhibit morality as a body of scientific truth fell into discredit, and the disposition to dwell on the emotional side of the moral consciousness became prevalent. But thus the objectivity of duty, with which its authority is bound up, fell out of view, without its being perceived how serious the loss was: for example, we find Hutcheson, in intention most orthodox of moral Professors, innocently asking, "why the moral sense should not vary in different human beings, as the palate does." When, however, the new doctrine was endorsed by the dreaded name of Hume, its dangerous nature, and the need of bringing again into prominence the properly intellectual element of the moral faculty, was clearly seen: and this work was undertaken as a part of the general philosophic protest of the Scotch school against the Empiricism that had culminated in Hume. But this school claimed as its characteristic merit that it met Empiricism on its own ground; and shewed among the facts of psychological experience which Empiricism professed to observe, the principles and assumptions which it repudiated. And thus in Ethics it was led rather to expound and reaffirm the morality of Common Sense, than to offer any subtler principles which could not be so easily supported by an appeal to common experience.

So much for differences strictly methodical. I pass now to consider variations of view as to the precise object of moral intuition, the quality immediately apprehended in the moral judgment. These are peculiarly subtle and difficult to fix in clear and precise language, and I therefore reserve them for a separate chapter.

CHAPTER IX.

GOOD.

§ 1. We have hitherto spoken of the quality of conduct discerned by our moral faculty as "rightness," which is the term commonly used by English moralists. We have regarded this term, and its equivalents in ordinary use, as implying the existence of an absolute rule or imperative, prescribing certain actions in themselves, or a certain ultimate end of actions. It was observed that it is impossible even for Hedonists definitely to exclude the notion expressed by these terms, in so far as all systems point to courses of action different from those actually adopted by the men whom the moralist addresses. The moralist outlines an ideal of conduct which he maintains to be a true ideal: the deviations from this ideal which he actually meets among men cannot be indifferent to him: he must disapprove of them and prescribe conformity with or approximation to his ideal. For example, the Epicurean shews men by what actions each may obtain the greatest amount of pleasure possible for him: as these actions are not what men actually do perform, they are naturally described as actions that "ought" to be performed.

No doubt the Epicurean may avoid introducing, even implicitly, this idea of "ought" into his account of the ultimate end of conduct: for he may say (as indeed Kant says) that his own happiness is what each individual universally or necessarily does desire, and that therefore there is no room for the notion that he *ought* to desire it. I have already tried to shew, chap. 4, that this statement is not in accordance with facts. But even if it were in any sense true, it would still

be undeniable that each one's actions do not tend universally or even normally to promote his own *greatest* happiness, even as he conceives it: and that conduct consistently so directed throughout life is conduct that *is* not, and therefore (we must say) *ought* to be.

And hence we may perhaps say that this notion of "ought," when once it has been developed, is a necessary form of our moral apprehension, just as space is now a necessary form of our sense-perceptions.

Still it is possible to take a view of morality which at any rate leaves in the background the cognition of rule and restraint, the imperative, inhibitive, coercive effect of the moral ideal. We may consider the action to which the moral faculty prompts us intrinsically "good:" so that the doing of it is in itself desirable, an end at which it is reasonable to aim[1].

This, as I noticed in chap. 6, is the more ancient view of Ethics: it was taken exclusively by all the Greek schools of Moral Philosophy except the Stoics; and even with them "Good" was the more fundamental conception, although in later Stoicism the quasi-jural aspect of good conduct came into prominence. And this historical illustration may serve to shew the importance of this substitution of the idea of "goodness" for that of "rightness," which at first sight might appear purely formal or even verbal. For the chief characteristics of ancient ethical controversy as distinguished from modern may be traced to this, that a generic notion is used instead of a specific one in expressing the common moral judgments of conduct. For Common Sense regards Virtue or right action as only a species of good: and so on this view of the moral intuition, the first question that offers itself, when we endeavour to systematize conduct, is how to determine the relation of this species of good to the rest of the genus. It was on this question that the Greek thinkers argued, from first to

[1] In modern language the term "Good" as applied to conduct has distinctly the specific meaning of "morally excellent." It seems however legitimate, and convenient for our present purpose, to consider this only as a special application of the fundamental notion of "Good" = "intrinsically preferable or desirable."

Now no doubt there is a close correspondence between our apprehension of pleasure derived from an object, and our recognition that the object is in itself "good." And if we consider the usage of the term outside the sphere of character and conduct, it seems plausible to say that "good" means (directly or indirectly) "pleasant." The good things of life are things which give pleasure, whether sensual or emotional: either directly, as good food, good wines, good poems, pictures, music: or indirectly, as good instruments of all kinds. And hence there is a strong *à priori* argument for Hume's view (commonly known as "utilitarian"), that in its application to character and conduct "good" must have the same meaning: and that Virtues are qualities directly or indirectly agreeable to the virtuous man or to others. A little reflection, however, will shew that we may admit this account of the notion, as far as it is supported by common sense, without practically adopting Hedonistic principles. For however closely connected the judgment that a thing is good may be with the consciousness that we derive pleasure from it, it is quite clear that the latter may vary to an indefinite extent while the former remains constant. Suppose we derive pleasure from a thing today and pronounce it "good:" then if tomorrow it no longer gives us pleasure, we do not therefore say that it has become less good: we consider the fault to lie in our temporary incapacity to apprehend its goodness. And we recognise that the capacity of deriving pleasure from different kinds of good things is possessed by different persons in different degrees. As regards each class of things which we call good (omitting the class of instruments, which are obviously not judged to be good intrinsically, but only as a means to something else) we are agreed that some persons have more and some less taste: and it is only the judgment of persons of good taste that we recognise as valid in respect of the real goodness of the things enjoyed. Of his own pleasure each individual is the final judge, and there is no appeal from his decision; but the affirmation of goodness in any object involves the assumption of an objective or absolute standard, which we believe the persons to whom we attribute good taste to possess, perfectly or approximately. But, again, it does not appear to be always the person of best taste who

derives the greatest enjoyment from any kind of good and pleasant things. We are familiar with the fact that connoisseurs of wines, pictures, &c., often retain their intellectual faculty of appraising the merits of the objects which they criticize, and deciding on their respective places in the scale of excellence, even when their susceptibilities to pleasure from these objects are comparatively blunted and exhausted. And more generally we see that freshness and fulness of feeling by no means go along with taste and judgment: and that a person who possesses the former may derive more pleasure from inferior objects than another may from the best.

But, further, while allowing that the judgment that any object is good of its kind is closely connected with the apprehension of pleasure derived from it, we must observe that it is always to a specific kind of pleasure that the affirmation of goodness corresponds: and that if the object happens to give us pleasure of a different kind, we do not therefore call it good —at least without qualification. For instance, we should not call a wine good solely because it was wholesome: nor a horse because it was beautiful, if deficient in useful qualities: nor should we call a man a good general or a good lawyer on account of his piety: nor a poem good on account of its moral lessons. And hence when we come to consider the meaning of the term "good" as applied to conduct, there is no reason, so far, to suppose that it has any reference or correspondence to *all* the pleasure that may result from the conduct. Rather the perception of goodness or virtue in actions would seem to be analogous to the perception of beauty in material things: which is normally accompanied with a specific pleasure which we call "æsthetic," but has often no discoverable relation to the general usefulness or agreeableness of the thing discerned to be beautiful. Nay, we often recognise this kind of excellence in things hurtful and dangerous: while many useful things we do not think beautiful.

It does not, then, seem that the general admission that things which are called "good" are sources of pleasure, and that it is as such that they are thought to be good, even tends to make us accept Maximum Happiness as the ultimate end of conduct. For it seems (1) that the attribution of

goodness to conduct (as to other things) corresponds not generally to all the pleasure that may be caused by the conduct, but to a specific pleasure, in this case the contemplative satisfaction which the conduct causes to a disinterested spectator: and (2) it is not thought to excite this specific pleasure generally in proportion to its goodness, but only (at most) in persons of perfect moral taste: and even in their case we can distinguish the intellectual apprehension of goodness from the pleasurable emotion which commonly accompanies it, and may suppose the latter element of consciousness diminished almost indefinitely. So that (as far as this line of reasoning goes) the pleasure actually caused by the best conduct may be almost insignificant, and much less than what would result from some other kind of action.

§ 3. If, then, the natural judgment that affirms a thing to be good, though closely connected with consciousness of pleasure, cannot be considered as equivalent to a judgment respecting pleasure: it seems that the scale in which any number of objects compared together are arranged in respect of goodness or badness is naturally determined by such simple ultimate intuitions as those by which we determine comparative magnitudes of material things. We will not yet ask how far we can decide by similar intuitions on the relative goodness of things different in kind: of acts of virtue, for example, in comparison with works of art or objects of appetite. Confining ourselves for the present to the good in conduct, we have to ascertain the exact relation between the perception that an action is *right*, and the perception that it is *good*. They seem to coincide substantially, but with two important differences. First, as was before said, the former perception is essentially positive, and carries with it an absolutely authoritative (though not irresistible) direction to the will to do the act. The latter is comparative: many alternative acts may be good, though in different degrees: and even when we have judged that one kind of conduct is "best" in the sense that it has more of the specific excellence which we recognise in conduct, it may be still questioned whether the finest or noblest conduct is always better than other goods which life offers us.

Secondly, the *right* conduct is always within our power:

what we *ought* to do we *can* do; or rather—as I do not mean here to introduce the metaphysical controversy as to the Freedom of the Will—there is at least no other insuperable obstacle to our doing it except absence of motive. But the Good or Excellent in conduct is not necessarily within our power[1]: there are many nobilities and graces of behaviour which we cannot attain at will: and for this reason again we often feel that the recognition of goodness in conduct does not carry with it a clear and definite precept to do likewise, but rather

> the vague desire
> That stirs an imitative will.

With these qualifications we may say that the difference between the two phases of Intuitivism in which these notions are respectively prominent, is purely formal: their practical prescriptions are never found to conflict. Though conduct on the whole wrong may have a certain goodness, the right conduct must always be best, or at least the best that is in our power. And hence it seems to me that, at the present stage of thought, we must distinguish between the ideas of *Goodness* and *Beauty* as applied to actions: although there is much affinity between them, and they have frequently been identified, especially by the Greek thinkers. And indeed both the ideas themselves and the corresponding pleasurable emotions, arising on the contemplation of conduct, are often indistinguishable: the high, noble, admirable in character, is a species of the beautiful: the delineation of human virtue is an important part of the means which the artist has at his disposal for producing his peculiar effects: and a noble action affects us like a scene, a picture, or a strain of music. Still, on looking closer, we see not only that there is much good conduct which is not beautiful, or at least does not sensibly impress us as such: but also that certain kinds of crime and wickedness have a splendour and sublimity of their own. For example, such a career as Cæsar Borgia's, as a French critic of fine moral as well as æsthetic sensibility says, is "beau comme une tempête, comme un abîme." It is true, I think, that in all such cases the beauty

[1] That is directly and at the moment: of course, in so far as it is stated as a rational end, it must be at least indirectly attainable by effort.

depends upon the exhibition in the criminal's conduct of striking gifts and excellences mingled with the wickedness: but it does not seem that we can abstract the latter without impairing the æsthetic effect. And hence we cannot identify the purely æsthetic view of conduct with what may be called the æsthetic phase of the moral view: the most beautiful conduct is not absolutely the best, but only *ceteris paribus*.

§ 4. We have hitherto considered the idea of Good in its application to conduct: and assuming that in judging an act to be good and therefore choosing to do it, we have no end, to use Aristotle's phrase, beyond and beside the action: that to do the action well is recognised as an ultimate end, just as in the now more ordinary form of the moral judgment, the mere recognition of duty contains a sufficient reason for doing it.

We saw, however, that the former kind of judgment naturally suggests a doubt as to its own finality: for it suggests that there are other things good and intrinsically desirable, the value of which must be somehow coordinated and compared with that of good conduct. Indeed it would not be unnatural or paradoxical to consider the notion of Good as primarily applicable to permanent results of actions, material or otherwise: and to regard all conduct as merely a means to such permanent results. We should thus be led to a method *primâ facie* quite different from the one just discussed. This method would obviously take different forms, according to the different definitions that may be given of the class of things intrinsically good or ultimate ends. Now excluding Pleasure or Happiness (as essentially *not* a permanent result) we may divide the objects commonly judged to be good into (1) Qualities of human beings, mental or bodily, and (2) all other good objects. Among these latter we may first notice the material things already mentioned to which the notion is ordinarily applied, as "good" wines, horses, &c. As was said, we do not always call such things good in proportion to the pleasure which they actually give us. Still, reflection seems to shew that they are not thought to possess this quality of goodness intrinsically and out of relation to human beings or at least to some consciousness. No doubt there is a point of view, half religious half poetic, sometimes adopted with great earnestness of feeling, from

which the whole universe and not merely a certain condition of rational or sentient beings is contemplated as good: just as the Creator in Genesis is described as contemplating it. But such a view can scarcely be developed into a method of ethics. Indeed it is almost antithetical to morality: if virtue is to live and thrive we require to think some parts of the universe bad or at least capable of improvement. And we do not seem to have any ground for drawing such a distinction between different portions of the non-sentient universe, considered in themselves and out of relation to sentient beings. An exception to this statement may be taken from the fact that we commonly judge some inanimate objects, scenes, &c. to be objectively beautiful, and others indifferent or even unsightly. Still no one would consider it rational to aim at the production of beauty in external nature, apart from any possible contemplation of it by human beings. In fact when beauty is maintained to be objective, it is not commonly meant that it exists as beauty out of relation to any mind whatsoever: but only that there is some standard of beauty valid for all minds.

This leads us however to observe that there are results commonly judged to be good, which, though we do not conceive them to exist out of relation to human beings (or at least minds of some kind), are yet so far separable as ends from the human beings on whom their existence depends, that their realization may conceivably come into competition with the perfection or happiness of the latter. Thus, though beautiful things cannot be thought worth producing except as possible objects of contemplation, still a man may devote himself to their production without any consideration of the persons who are to contemplate them. Similarly knowledge is a good which cannot exist except in the minds of men: and yet one may be more interested in the development of knowledge than in its possession by any particular human beings: so that he may aim at the advancement of knowledge and neglect its diffusion. And the same may be said of other elements of that complex of ideal good, with the realization of which the finest minds of our race have been concerned.

Still, as soon as this view is clearly stated, it must be ad-

mitted that it is not truly rational: and that all objects of this kind, as well as all things more distinctly external, are only reasonably to be sought in so far as they conduce either to the Happiness (which we do not at present consider) or to the Perfection or Excellence of human existence. I say "human," for though most utilitarians consider the pleasure (and freedom from pain) of the inferior animals to be included in the Happiness which they take as the right and proper end of conduct: no one, I conceive, would contend that we ought to aim at perfecting them, except as a means to our ends, or at least as objects of æsthetic contemplation for us.

It seems then, on reflection, that all that we commonly judged to be "good" is thought to be such not in itself and absolutely, but as contributing to the excellence of human existence. Or shall we include also the existence of beings above the human? For we certainly apply the idea of Good to the Divine Existence, just as we do to His work, and indeed in a preeminent manner. And when it is said that "we should do all things to the glory of God," it seems at first sight to be implied that the existence of God is made better by our glorifying Him. Still this inference when explicitly drawn seems somewhat impious; and theologians generally recoil from it, and refrain from using the notion of a possible addition to the Goodness of the Divine existence as a ground of human duty. Nor can the influence of our actions on other extra-human intelligences besides the Divine be at present made matter of scientific discussion.

We may conclude then, that if there be any absolute permanent Good to be sought by man it can only be the Goodness or Excellence of Human Existence.

But here the question has to be raised, "Does man exist at all as a permanent entity? Is not the notion of Existence as applied to man properly identical with Conscious Existence, the stream of action and feeling of which the parts are almost or altogether as transient as the Time in which they exist?" Now here it would be out of place to enter into the metaphysical question as to the existence of permanent substrata or Noumena, mental or material. We must be content with the common-sense view, according to which the human body

is conceived as a comparatively permanent existence, capable of certain equally permanent excellences, such as beauty, symmetry, &c. And no doubt we commonly think of mind as equally or perhaps far more enduring, and even destined to endless existence. But when we reflect upon our conception of any particular mind, we find that all that is definite in it—all indeed that it contains, except the bare notion of permanent identity, represents merely possibilities of existence. We conceive each of the minds we know (in so far as we separate it in thought from the particular state in which it now exists) as being a complex of tendencies, i.e. Faculties, Habits, Dispositions, &c.: all these terms denoting, as metaphysicians agree, potential existence as distinct from actual. And it seems clear that mental possibilities are not valuable to us, except as representing future mental actualities. Hence when we speak of Excellence or Perfection of Character as the true Good and ultimate end at which we ought to aim, we seem to mean really Excellence of future Conduct in which the character now being formed is expected to exhibit itself. The same is true of many excellences which are commonly classed as bodily, such as aptitudes for delicate and complex movements of the limbs: what we really admire is the skilful performance, not the permanent aptitude. And as for the other bodily excellences before noticed, beauty, symmetry, &c., we seem to value these (apart from their utility) just as we value similar qualities exhibited elsewhere in the material world, merely as objects of contemplation by minds, and so furnishing them with an excellent kind of consciousness.

Thus we are led to the conclusion that the only Good that can claim to be so intrinsically, and at the same time capable of furnishing a standard of conduct, is Perfection or Excellence of conscious life. And so we seem brought round again to the method discussed in the first part of this chapter, the form or phase of Intuitionism which takes "good" instead of "right" conduct as its most general notion. Only there is this important difference, that Conscious Life includes besides actions the whole range of feeling. We saw in chap. 7 that we had to distinguish the recognition of Excellence in feelings from the recognition of their Pleasantness: and that

this distinction seemed to be implied in the contrast drawn by recent Hedonists between the *quality* of pleasures and their *quantity*. In aiming, therefore, at the Perfection of conscious life, we shall endeavour to realize this excellence in all our feelings. Now though Feeling is to some extent a subject of our common intuitions of right and wrong (as we think that actions, to be perfectly right, must be done from right motives), yet it seems to be so only in a subordinate and restricted manner: and there is much excellence of feeling (elevation or refinement of taste, &c.) which is not thus included. It seems then that the method which takes Perfection or Excellence of conscious existence as ultimate end, if we restrict its scope to the Perfection of the individual agent, coincides *primâ facie* with the ordinary form of Intuitionism, since Virtues are always recognised as the chief of human perfections: but that in so far as the former notion comprehends more than virtue, there is likely to be a certain practical divergence between the two methods. And if we take the Perfection of mankind in general as the ultimate end, this divergence may be increased indefinitely: for we cannot assume *à priori* that the best way for each man to attain his own perfection is by aiming at the perfection of others. We cannot but hope that this is the case, just as we cannot but hope that when an individual sacrifices his own happiness to that of others, the sacrifice will be in some way repaid him: but perhaps the constitution of things does not admit of this.

We will recur to the consideration of these divergences after the detailed examination of the Intuitive morality with which we shall be occupied in Book III.

BOOK II.

EGOISM.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER I.

THE PRINCIPLE AND METHOD OF EGOISM.

§ 1. THE object of the present book is to examine the theory of reasonable conduct which has been already defined in outline under the name of Egoism. It is, perhaps, a sufficient reason for considering this first of the three systems with which this treatise is principally concerned, that there seems to be more general agreement among reflective persons as to the reasonableness of its fundamental principle, than exists in the case either of Intuitionism or of that Universalistic Hedonism to which I propose to restrict the name of Utilitarianism. For even Utilitarians of the school of Bentham (as has been already noticed), although they put forward the greatest happiness of the greatest number as the "right and proper" end of conduct, yet regard it as natural and normal, and so reasonable or not unreasonable, that each individual should aim at his own greatest happiness. And similarly the most influential English moralist of the Intuitional school expressly allows "that our ideas of happiness and misery are of all our ideas the nearest and most important to us...that, though virtue or moral rectitude does indeed consist in affection to and pursuit of what is right and good as such: yet, when we sit down in a cool hour, we can neither justify to ourselves this or any other pursuit till we are convinced that it will be for our happiness, or at least not contrary to it[1]."

[1] Butler, Serm. XI.

And even Clarke[1] admits that "though Virtue truly deserves to be chosen for its own sake and Vice to be avoided...it is not *very reasonably to be expected* that men" should prefer Virtue to "all the comforts of life, and even life itself, without any expectation of future recompense."

Again, we have noticed[2] that throughout the ethical debate that was carried on for centuries in the schools of ancient Greece (though no doubt the idea of Good was not clearly understood to mean Happiness, as we use the latter term), the principle that each individual ought primarily to aim at his own good was always assumed. In Butler's language, the faculty of Conscience was not yet distinguished from Rational Self-love. And so in the ancient world Self-sacrifice, though often practised in a striking and touching manner, was not conceived as a Duty clearly and under its proper notion: it was justified to moral reflection as a kind of pursuit of one's own interest. As an honourable and noble mode of action, it was felt to be "good" for the agent.

Again, in the ages of Christian faith, it has been still more obvious and natural to hold, though on different grounds, that Virtue is only enlightened and far-seeing Self-love. Nor has this doctrine been held only by persons of a cold and calculating turn of mind: we find it urged with emphasis by so chivalrous and highminded a preacher as Bishop Berkeley. No doubt this is only one side or element of the Christian view: the opposite doctrine, that an action done from motives of self-interest is not properly virtuous, has continually asserted itself as either openly conflicting or in some manner reconciled with the former. Still the former, though less refined and elevated, seems to have been the commonest view. And generally speaking, we may say that common sense assumes that interested or Egoistic conduct is *primâ facie* reasonable: and that the *onus probandi* lies with those who maintain that disinterested conduct, as such, is reasonable.

But, as has been before said, in the common notions of "interest," "happiness," and also of "egoism," "egoistic," &c., there is a certain amount of vagueness and ambiguity, which

[1] *Boyle Lectures* (1705). Prop. I. p. 116.

[2] *Cf.* I. c. 7.

must be carefully excluded in a discussion that aims at scientific exactness. By Egoism, therefore, we must mean Egoistic Hedonism, the system that fixes as the reasonable ultimate end of each individual's action his own greatest happiness: i. e. a life so arranged that the excess in it of pleasurable over painful consciousness shall be the greatest possible. And if the method is to be clear and consistent, pleasurable consciousness must be sought as pleasurable: and therefore the less pleasurable consciousness must not be preferred to the more pleasurable, on the ground of any other qualities that it may possess. The distinctions of *quality* that Mill and others urge can only be admitted as grounds of preference, if and in so far as they can be resolved into distinctions of quantity. This, as has been said, is not the only system that may naturally and fairly be called Egoism. For not only may consciousness be preferred as elevated and refined, as morally and æsthetically better, instead of being chosen merely as pleasurable: but also many other things besides a certain kind of consciousness are included in the common notion of the Good or the Desirable: for example, wealth, health and strength, beauty, knowledge, fame. However, the mass of mankind would probably admit on reflection that they consider these objects desirable only as means to the end of happiness: that it is not reasonable ever to sacrifice happiness to the attainment of them, however strongly we may be prompted to do so in moments of impulse.

It may (as was argued Bk. I. c. 4) be not only natural, but desirable as conducive to happiness, that in moments of pursuit these external goods should seem to be ultimate ends. But when we attempt that synthesis or systematization of impulses and activities which is implied in the very notion of rational action: the principle or criterion most naturally suggested for comparing the different objective goods, so as to combine them into one comprehensive end or harmonious system of ends, and to ascertain how far each particular good is to be sought and which is to be preferred when two are incompatible, seems to be this subjective criterion of pleasure[1]. And accordingly in

[1] Those who would distinguish from this and prefer as their ultimate end what in chap. 9 of the last book we called "Perfection of Conscious Life" are after all a small, though cultivated, minority.

Butler's scheme of human nature considered as a polity or hierarchy of impulses, self-love is made supreme and naturally authoritative over all the particular passions and desires that tend towards external objects. In short, when we try to make natural Egoism precise, it is found to resolve itself into pure Hedonism: and it is only in this more precise form that it seems worth while to subject it to a detailed examination. We must therefore understand by an Egoist a man who aims at getting out of life the greatest possible amount of pleasurable consciousness: and so, when two or more courses of action are open to him, represents to himself as accurately as possible the pleasures and pains that are likely to attend each, and chooses the one which he thinks will involve as concomitant or consequent the greatest surplus of pleasure over pain.

§ 2. It must however be pointed out that the fundamental *principle* and the *method* of egoism, as just explained, are by no means inseparable: in fact they have not unfrequently been separated by moralists. A man may seek to obtain the greatest possible pleasure within his reach, and yet not attempt to ascertain empirically what amount of pleasure and pain is likely to attend any course of action. He may believe that he has some surer deductive method for determining the species of conduct which will make him most happy in the long run. He may believe this on grounds of Positive Religion, because God has promised happiness as a reward for obedience to certain definite commands: or of Natural Religion, because God being just and benevolent must have so ordered the world that Happiness will in the long run be distributed in proportion to Virtue. It is (e.g.) by a combination of both these arguments that Paley connects the Universalistic Hedonism that he adopts as a method for determining duties, with the Egoism which seems to him self-evident as a fundamental principle of rational conduct. Or again, a man may connect virtue with happiness by a process of *à priori* reasoning, purely ethical: as Aristotle seems to do by the assumption that the "best" activity will be always attended by the greatest pleasure as its inseparable concomitant: "best" being determined by a reference to moral intuition, or to the common moral opinions of men generally, or of well-bred and well-educated men. Or the deduction

by which Maximum Pleasure is inferred as a concomitant or consequent of a particular kind of action may be psychological or physiological: we may have some general theory as to the connection of pleasure with some other physical or psychical fact, according to which we can deduce the amount of pleasure that will attend any particular kind of behaviour: as (e.g.) we may consider ourselves justified in assuming that a perfectly healthy and harmonious exercise of our different bodily and mental functions will always produce the greatest pleasure in the long run. In this case, though accepting unreservedly the Hedonistic principle, we shall not be called upon to estimate and compare particular pleasures, but rather to define the notions of "perfect health" and "harmony of functions" and consider how these may be attained. Still in using such deductive methods we should naturally appeal to consciousness, at least as supplying confirmation or verification. And as Pleasure and its intensity are empirical facts known to us by reflection or introspection: the natural method of Egoistic Hedonism is that which we may call Empirical-reflective: and it would seem to be this that is commonly used in egoistic deliberation. It will be well therefore to examine this method in the first instance: to ascertain clearly the assumptions which it involves, and estimate the exactness of its results.

CHAPTER II.

EMPIRICAL HEDONISM.

§ 1. THE first and most fundamental assumption, involved not only in the empirical method of Egoistic Hedonism, but in the very conception of "Greatest Happiness" as an end of action, is the commensurability of Pleasures and Pains. Or perhaps we should strictly say that we are forced to assume all pleasures and pains to have definite quantitative relations to each other: for otherwise they cannot be conceived as possible elements of a total of which we are to seek the maximum. It is not absolutely necessary to suppose that there is no one kind of pleasure so much more pleasant than another, that the smallest conceivable amount of the former would outweigh the greatest conceivable amount of the latter. And we find it sometimes asserted by persons of enthusiastic and passionate temperament, that there are feelings so exquisitely delightful, that one moment of their rapture is preferable to an eternity of agreeable consciousness of an inferior kind. But probably these assertions are consciously hyperbolical, and are not intended to be taken as scientific statements: at any rate, the common opinion would seem to be, that all the pleasures that man can experience bear a finite ratio to each other in respect of pleasantness: and so that they can all be arranged in a certain scale as greater or less in some finite degree.

And from this it follows that (to use Bentham's terms) the Intensity of a pleasure can be balanced against its Duration[1]:

[1] Bentham gives four qualities of any pleasure or pain (taken singly) as important for purposes of Hedonistic calculation: (1) Intensity, (2) Duration, (3) Certainty, (4) Proximity. If we assume (as above argued) that Intensity must be commensurable with Duration, the influence of the other qualities on the comparative value of pleasures and pains is not difficult to determine: for we are accustomed to estimate the value of chances numerically, and by this

for if one pleasure be intensively greater than another in some finite degree, the latter may be increased extensively until it just balances the former in amount. That is, not merely can pleasures be arranged in a scale, as more or less pleasurable: but each is conceived to have, as pleasure, a certain positive quantity: which involves the assumption of a hedonistic zero, or perfectly neutral state of consciousness, as a point from which pleasures may be measured. This latter assumption emerges still more clearly when we consider the comparison and balancing of pleasures with pains, which Hedonism assumes to be possible. For pain must be reckoned as the negative quantity of pleasure, to be balanced against and subtracted from the positive: there must therefore be a point of transition in consciousness at which we pass from the positive to the negative. That is, this strictly indifferent or neutral consciousness is at least ideally possible. It is not absolutely necessary to assume that such a state ever actually occurs. Still experience seems to shew that a state at any rate very nearly approximating to this is even common: and we certainly experience continual transitions from pleasure to pain and *vice versa*, and thus (unless we conceive all such transitions to be abrupt) we must exist at least momentarily in this neutral state.

Here we may notice the paradox of Epicurus[1], that painlessness is equivalent to the highest possible pleasure: so that if we can attain absolute freedom from pain, the goal of Hedonism is reached: after that we may vary, but cannot increase our pleasure. The paradox was probably due in some measure to an unavowed desire in the mind of Epicurus to mitigate the sharp provocation which unmixed Hedonism naturally gives to the moral sense of mankind. It is, however, merely the exag-

method we can tell exactly (in so far as the degree of uncertainty can be exactly determined) how much the doubtfulness of a pleasure detracts from its value: and *proximity* is a property which it is reasonable to disregard except in so far as it is a particular case of certainty. For my feelings a year hence should be just as important to me as my feelings next minute, if only I could make an equally sure forecast of them. Indeed this equal and impartial concern for all parts of one's conscious life is perhaps the most prominent element in the common notion of the *rational*—as opposed to the merely *impulsive*—pursuit of pleasure.

[1] Cf. Cic. *de Fin.* Bk. I.

geration of a truth that it is important to notice: namely, that this neutral feeling—hedonistic zero, as I have called it—is not (as might vaguely be thought) the normal condition of our consciousness, out of which we occasionally sink into pain, and occasionally rise into pleasure. Nature has not been so niggardly to man as this: so long as health is retained, and pain and irksome toil banished, the mere sense of living, the mere performance of the ordinary habitual functions of life, is itself a pleasure of a certain degree. Similarly we may venture to say that the "apathy" which so large a proportion of Greek moralists in the post-Aristotelian period regarded as the ideal state of existence, was not really conceived by them as "without one pleasure and without one pain:" but rather as a state of placid intellectual contemplation, which in philosophic minds might easily reach a high degree of pleasure.

§ 2. This last observation will have shewn the desirability of getting a more precise notion of pleasure than we have yet attained.

How shall we define pleasure? It seems obvious to define it as the kind of feeling which pleases us, which we like or prefer. Or if we consider it in relation to the action of which it is the end and stimulus, we may say that it is the kind of feeling which prompts us to actions tending to produce or sustain it: to sustain it, if actually present; and to produce it, if only represented in idea. If, however, we define pleasure thus, a question of some subtlety arises when we compare pleasures and consider which is the greatest. Are we to say that pleasures are greater and less exactly in proportion as they exercise more or less influence in stimulating the will to action? At first sight it would seem so: but when we look closer we see clearly that the intellectual valuation of represented pleasures is continually out of proportion to the volitional stimulus which accompanies the representation. On this point the best psychologists seem to be agreed. For instance, J. S. Mill points out that men often "from infirmity of character" choose what they "know to be the less valuable" good. Mr Bain again characterizes different kinds of feeling as more and less "volitional": by which he means that with an equal intensity as pleasures (or pains) they yet stimulate action some in a greater,

some in a less, degree. We must therefore define pleasure, if we are to estimate it exactly, not as the kind of feeling which we actually seek and pursue, but as that which we judge to be preferable. Of course the two definitions are to a great extent coincident, and in the case of perfectly rational egoistic conduct they would coincide altogether: but no one will deliberately maintain that such conduct is common, even on a purely subjective interpretation of "rational." All would agree (though it is sometimes overlooked in argument) that few or no men act in perfect conformity to their own perceptions of their own interests.

But now another difficulty occurs. It has been already stated, as an assumption of Hedonism, that it is reasonable to prefer pleasures in proportion to their intensity, and not to allow this ground of preference to be outweighed by any merely qualitative difference. If of two pleasures the one that is morally or æsthetically better, "higher" or more "refined," is at the same time less pleasant, the Hedonist must consider it unreasonable to prefer it. This statement implies that the non-hedonistic preference (on grounds of quality as opposed to quantity) is possible: and indeed it is commonly thought to be of frequent occurrence. But if we take the definition of pleasure just given—that it is the feeling which we judge to be preferable—it seems to be a contradiction in terms to say that the less pleasant feeling can ever be judged preferable to the more pleasant.

Of this difficulty two solutions may be given, which on closer examination appear to reduce themselves to one. In the first place, it would seem that in deciding on the preferableness of a feeling, considered merely as pleasant, the judgment of the individual who feels it at the time of feeling it must be taken as final. Pleasure *is* in intensity what it appears to be: the Real in this case coincides with the Phenomenal, and the sentient individual alone is directly cognizant of the phenomenon. Others may know (on general grounds) that by preferring this gratification to some other which he might hereafter enjoy he will obtain less happiness on the whole, and so far may rightly pronounce his choice mistaken; but no one can controvert his preference as far as the

present feeling alone is concerned. But when we judge of the preferable quality of a state of consciousness as distinct from its pleasantness[1], we seem to take a point of view from which the judgment of the sentient individual is no longer finally valid. While the pleasantness of the feeling is a purely subjective fact of which he who feels has alone direct experience; in estimating its "elevation" or "refinement" we seem to appeal to some objective standard which others can apply as well as he.

Or, secondly, it may be said that when one kind of consciousness is judged to be qualitatively superior to another, although less pleasant, it is not the feeling itself that is preferred, but something in the circumstances under which it arises, in the active or passive relations of the sentient individual to other persons or things or permanent objects of thought. And perhaps this view is really required to complete the former explanation. For if we separate in thought any state of consciousness from all its objective circumstances and conditions (and also from all its effects on the consciousness of the same individual or of others) and contemplate it merely as the transient feeling of a single subject; it seems impossible to find in it any other preferable quality than that which we call its pleasantness, as to which the judgment of the sentient individual must be taken as finally valid.

This at any rate is the preference that Hedonism regards as ultimately rational, viz. the preference of feeling or consciousness considered merely as such, without any regard to the objective relations under which it arises. And the fundamental assumption of Hedonism, clearly stated, is that all feelings considered merely as feelings can be arranged in a certain scale of preferableness, so that the preferableness or pleasantness of each bears a definite ratio to that of all the others.

The empirical method of Hedonism, however, assumes somewhat more than this. It assumes that this scale and these ratios are empirically cognizable: are given in our experience

[1] It was before observed that by saying that one pleasure is superior in *quality* to another we may mean that it is preferable when considered merely as pleasant: in which case difference in kind resolves itself into difference in degree.

of pleasure and pain. And indeed if the former assumption be conceded, this can scarcely be denied: as feeling cannot be conceived to exist otherwise than as it is felt—its manner of existence is its being felt—and therefore no state of consciousness can be thought to be more or less pleasurable or painful, than we in feeling it perceive it to be.

There is one more assumption of a fundamental kind, which is not perhaps involved in the acceptance of the Hedonistic calculus considered as purely theoretical, but is implied if it be put forward as a practical method for determining right conduct: the assumption, namely, that we can by foresight and calculation increase our pleasures and decrease our pains.

It may be thought that this must be granted without discussion, and that it is even pedantic to state it formally. And in fact no one will deny that the conditions upon which our pleasures and pains depend are to some extent cognizable by us and within our own control. But, as we shall see, it may be maintained that the habitual practice of hedonistic observation and calculation has an inevitable tendency to decrease our pleasures generally, or the most important of them: so that it becomes doubtful whether we can gain our greatest happiness by seeking it, or at any rate by trying to seek it, with scientific exactness.

CHAPTER III.

EMPIRICAL HEDONISM CONTINUED.

§ 1. LET, then, pleasure be defined as feeling that is preferable or desirable, considered merely as feeling, and therefore from a point of view from which the judgment of the sentient individual is final: and not considered in respect of its causes, or of the relations of the sentient individual to other persons or things, or of any other facts that come directly within the cognizance and judgment of others beside the sentient individual. And let it be assumed that all feelings can be compared from this point of view, and arranged in a scale, as more or less pleasant. Then the empirical-reflective method of Egoistic Hedonism would seem to be, that we should represent to ourselves the different series of feelings that experience leads us to infer as concomitant or consequent upon the different lines of conduct that lie open to us: judge which series, as thus represented, appears on the whole preferable: and adopt the corresponding line of conduct. The calculation is obviously too complex to be performed with anything like completeness: for any complete forecast of the future would involve a vast number of contingencies of varying degrees of probability: and to calculate the hedonistic value of each of these chances of feeling would be interminable. Still we may perhaps reduce the calculation within manageable limits, at the expense of strict scientific exactness, by neglecting the less probable and less important contingencies: as we do in some of the arts that have more definite ends, as strategy and medicine. For if the general in ordering a march, or the physician in recommending a change of abode, took into consideration all the

circumstances that were at all relevant to the end sought, their calculations would become impracticable: accordingly they confine themselves to the most important: and we may deal similarly with the Hedonistic art of life.

There are however objections urged against the Hedonistic method which go much deeper: and indeed may plausibly be pressed to the extreme of rejecting the method altogether, as intrinsically useless for the attainment of the end sought. A careful examination of these objections seems on all grounds desirable: as it will, at any rate, give us a clearer and juster view, both of the method itself and of the results that may be expected from it, than could be otherwise obtained.

It should, however, be premised that the objections now to be discussed are only those that can be taken, so to say, from *within* the system: arguments against the possibility of attaining by it the results at which it aims. We are not now to consider whether the principle of Egoistic Hedonism is to be accepted without reservation as the supreme maxim of conduct: or whether the rules deduced from it coincide with the current opinions as to what is right. The first of these questions is one which it hardly comes within the plan of this work to decide. The position here taken is that there are certain principles of conduct which claim to be reasonable, and appear to be so *primâ facie*, when considered each by itself: and that one of these is the principle of Egoistic Hedonism, that what really concerns each agent is his own feeling, and that his ultimate aim should be to get this as pleasant as possible. Now the current rules of morality, taken as a whole, scarcely appear—even *primâ facie*—to be rules prescribing for each individual the best way of securing his happiness in this life. It has no doubt been held that they really are such, and it will be important presently to consider this view: but we must do this impartially, without prejudging the question whether it is reasonable for the individual to conform to the dictates of Egoism or to the rules of ordinary morality, if the two are found to conflict.

If then we confine our attention to the objections tending to shew the inherent impracticability of the present method, we find that, for the most part, they may be arranged under two

heads. It is urged (1) that the comparison of pleasures in respect of their intensity, as empirically ascertained, is liable to such numerous and fundamental errors that its results are altogether untrustworthy: (2) that the habit of mind which results from the continual recourse to this comparison is itself unfavourable to the attainment of the greatest possible pleasure.

Let us examine these in order.

§ 2. It cannot be denied that it is natural and habitual to all or most men to compare pleasures and pains in respect of their intensity. For example, when we pass from one state of consciousness to another, or when in any way we are led to recall a state long past, we often pronounce unhesitatingly that the present state is more or less pleasant than the past.

But it is maintained (1) that this comparison as naturally made is both occasional and very rough, and that it can never be extended as scientific Hedonism seems to require, nor applied, with any accuracy, to all possible states however differing in quality: and (2) that as commonly practised it is liable to illusion, of which we can never measure the precise amount, while we are continually forced to recognise its existence. We may observe that this illusion was urged by Plato as a ground for distrusting the apparent affirmation of consciousness in respect of *present* pleasure. He thought that the apparent intensity of the coarser bodily pleasures was illusory; that these states of consciousness, being preceded by pain, were really only states of relief from pain, and so properly neutral, neither pleasant nor painful—in fact the hedonistic zero, as I have called it: only appearing pleasurable from contrast with the preceding pain.

To this, however, it has been answered, that in estimating pleasure there is no conceivable appeal from the immediate decision of consciousness. The Phenomenal is the Real: there is no other real that we can distinguish from it. And this seems clear, in so far as we are concerned only with the present state. But then, in any estimate of its intensity we are necessarily comparing it with some other state. And this must be an ideal, not an actual feeling: for though we can experience two or perhaps more pleasures at once, we do not

seem to experience them so as to compare them satisfactorily: for either the one interferes with the other, and prevents it from reaching its natural degree of intensity: or, more often, the two blend into one state of pleasurable consciousness, the elements of which we cannot estimate separately. But thus we see the possibility of error; for the ideal state may not adequately represent the pleasantness of the corresponding actual state. And in the hedonistic comparison, the validity of which we are now discussing, the objects compared will commonly be all represented or ideal states: for we are desiring to choose between two or more possible courses of conduct, and therefore to forecast future feelings.

Let us then examine more closely the manner in which this comparison is ordinarily performed, that we may see what positive grounds we have for mistrusting it.

In estimating for practical purposes the value of different pleasures open to us, we commonly trust most to our prospective imagination: we project ourselves into the future, and imagine what a particular pleasure will amount to under hypothetical circumstances. This imagination seems to be chiefly determined by our experience of past pleasures, the effect of which usually operates unconsciously, though sometimes particular instances of important pleasures occur to us as definitely remembered: but partly also by the state of our mind or nerves at the time, as we are almost always more susceptible to some pleasures than others, and these then appear greater. Partly, too, we are influenced by the experience of others sympathetically appropriated: and here again we sometimes definitely refer to particular experiences which have been communicated to us by individuals, and sometimes to the traditional generalizations which are thought to represent the common experience of mankind.

Now it does not seem that such a process as this is likely to be free from error: and indeed, no one pretends that it is. In fact there is scarcely any point upon which moralizers have dwelt with more emphasis than this, that man's forecast of pleasure is continually erroneous. Each of us frequently recognises his own mistakes: and each still more often attributes to others errors unseen by themselves, arising either

from misinterpretation of their own experience, or from ignorance or neglect of that of others.

How then are these errors to be eliminated? The obvious answer is that we must substitute for the instinctive, implicit inference just described a more scientific process of reasoning: by deducing the probable degree of our future pleasure or pain under any circumstances from inductive generalizations based on a sufficient number of careful observations of our own and others' experience. We have then to consider whether a process of this kind can be satisfactorily developed: a question which seems to resolve itself into the three following: First, how far can each of us estimate accurately his own past experience of pleasures and pains? secondly, how far can he appropriate the past experience of others? thirdly, how far can this knowledge of the past enable him to choose, with any certainty, the greatest happiness within his reach?

As regards the first of these questions, it seems at first sight a simple thing to take note of our different pleasures and pains as they occur, and to generalize from a series of such observations. But it must be remembered that what we have to note is the positive or negative degree of each feeling: it is not sufficient to know generally that we derive pleasures and pains from such and such sources: unless we can estimate them quantitatively, it is absurd to try to aim at our *greatest possible* happiness. We have therefore to compare each pleasure as it occurs, or as recalled in imagination, with other imagined pleasures: and the question is, whether such comparisons can ever be altogether trustworthy, or take rank as scientific observations.

Now for my own part, when I reflect on my pleasures and pains, and endeavour to compare them in respect of intensity, it seems to me that the comparative judgments which I pass are by no means clear and definite, even taking each separately. This is true even when I compare feelings of the same kind: and the vagueness and uncertainty increases, in proportion as the feelings differ in kind. Let us begin with sensual gratifications, which are thought to be especially definite and palpable. Suppose I am enjoying a good dinner: if I ask myself whether one kind of dish or wine gives me more plea-

sure than another, sometimes I can decide, sometimes not. So if I reflect upon two modes of bodily exercise that I may have taken: if one has been in a marked degree agreeable or tedious, I take note of it naturally: but it is not natural to me to go further than this in judging of their pleasurableness or painfulness, and the attempt to do so does not seem to lead to any clear affirmation. And similarly of intellectual exercises and states of consciousness predominantly emotional: even when the causes and quality of the feelings compared are similar, it is only when the differences in pleasantness are great, that hedonistic comparison seems to yield any definite result. But when I try to arrange in a scale pleasures differing in kind: to compare (e.g.) labour with rest, excitement with tranquillity, intellectual exercise with emotional effusion, the pleasure of scientific apprehension with that of beneficent action, the delight of social expansion with the delight of æsthetic reception: my judgment wavers and fluctuates far more, and it is but rarely that I can give any confident decision. And if this is the case with what Bentham calls "pure"—i.e. painless—pleasures, it is still more true of those even commoner states of consciousness, where a certain amount of pain or discomfort is mixed with pleasure, although the latter preponderates. If it is hard to say which of two different states of contentment was the greater pleasure, it seems still harder to compare a state of placid satisfaction with one of eager but hopeful suspense, or with triumphant conquest of painful obstacles. And perhaps it is still more difficult to compare pure pleasures with pure pains, especially when they do not occur simultaneously: and to say how much of the one kind of feeling we consider to be exactly balanced by a given amount of the other.

But again if these judgments are not clear and definite, still less are they consistent. I do not now mean that one man's estimate of the value of any kind of pleasures differs from another's: for each sentient individual must be the final judge of the pleasantness and painfulness of his own feelings, and therefore this kind of discrepancy does not affect the validity of the judgments, and creates no difficulty until any one tries to appropriate the experience of others. But I mean that each individual's judgment of the comparative value of his own

pleasures is apt to be different at different times: and that this variation is a legitimate ground for distrusting the validity of any particular comparison.

The causes of this variation seem to belong partly to the state of the mind at the time of making the representation: and partly to the represented feeling, or rather to certain universal conditions of its being represented, independent of the particular state of the representing mind. To begin with the latter: common reflection has long ago anticipated the observation of the scientific psychologist, that different kinds of pleasures and pains are not equally recoverable in idea. Bodily pain, e.g., unless it is both intense and prolonged, is very hard to recall after any considerable interval of time. I find it at this moment much less easy to recall the pain of having a tooth drawn, than the discomfort of expectancy which preceded the operation: although I am aware—by recalling judgments passed at the time—that the latter pain was trifling compared with the former. To this it seems due that past hardships, toils, and anxieties often appear pleasurable when we look back upon them, after some interval: for the excitement, the heightened sense of life that accompanied the painful struggle, would have been pleasurable if taken by itself: and it is this that we recall rather than the pain. In estimating pleasures the other cause of variation is more conspicuous: we are conscious of changes occasional or periodic in our estimate of them, depending upon changes in our mental or bodily condition. E.g. it is a matter of common remark with respect to the gratifications of appetite that we cannot estimate them adequately in the state of satiety[1], and that we are apt to exaggerate them in the state of desire. (It is no doubt also true that intensity of antecedent desire intensifies the pleasure of fruition when that comes—the pleasure not only *appears*, as Plato thought, but actually *is* greater. Still it is also a matter of common experience that pleasures which have been intensely desired are found less than they were imagined.)

[1] Hence the gourmand's advice that we should order the dinner of tomorrow just before the dinner of today: in order that we may represent to ourselves more faithfully the pleasure to be derived from different combinations of flavours.

There seem to be no special states of aversion, determined by bodily causes, and related to certain pains as our appetites to their correspondent pleasures; but all persons (though some more than others) are liable to be thrown by the prospect of pains into the state of passionate aversion which we call fear: in which state they are apt to exaggerate the kind of pain feared.

Further, when feeling any kind of pain or uneasiness we are apt to underrate its opposite: as Horace observes, in danger we value repose, overlooking its *ennui*, while the tedium of security makes us long for the excitement of danger. And again when we are absorbed in any particular pleasure, pleasures of a different kind are apt to be contemned: they appear coarse or thin, as the case may be: and the same is true in the state of eager desire. Indeed any strong excitement tends to make us contemptuous of alien pleasures and pains alike. And, more generally, we cannot represent to ourselves as very intense a pleasure of a kind that at the time of representing it we are incapable of experiencing: as (e.g.) the pleasures of intellectual or bodily exercise at the close of a wearying day: or any emotional pleasure when our susceptibility to the special emotion is temporarily exhausted. Nor is it easy to guard against error, as philosophers have often thought, by making our estimate in a cool and passionless state. For there are many pleasures which require precedent desire, and even enthusiasm and highly wrought excitement, in order to be experienced in their full intensity: and it is not likely that we should appreciate these adequately in a state of perfect tranquillity.

§ 3. These considerations place in a clearer light the extent and magnitude of the fundamental assumption of Hedonism, which at first sight we are ready to grant without hesitation; that all our feelings can be arranged in one scale of pleasures and pains, each having its own degree of desirability or the reverse, considered merely as feeling. For first, if we admit, as was said, that pleasure only exists as it is felt, it is hard to see how the degree of any pleasure can be proved to have any real existence. For the pleasure only has the degree as compared with others: but it cannot be actually felt along with these others: the comparison can only be made in imagination,

and this can only yield the hypothetical result that if they could be felt together one would be found greater than the other. The question then arises, what ground have we for believing this imaginative comparison accurate? Is the mind ever in such a state as to be a perfectly neutral and colourless medium for imagining all kinds of pleasures? The existence of such a neutral mood is obviously incapable of empirical proof: but can we say that experience, impartially examined, leaves it even a probable assumption? It certainly shews us the frequent occurrence of moods in which we have an apparent bias for or against a particular kind of feeling. Is it not probable that there is always some bias of this kind? that we are always more in tune for some pleasures, more sensitive to some pains, than we are to others? If so, may it not be said that this supposed scale of pleasures (which at first sight seemed so clear and familiar a notion that it would be extreme scepticism to doubt its validity) turns out to be strictly incognizable? in fact a mere philosophical chimera?

However, the conviction that our pleasures and pains have each a real definite degree, seems to be so deeply rooted in our minds, that we cannot but reject this sceptical conclusion: though we must admit that the belief cannot be verified by experience, and therefore that scientific Hedonism does not rest on an empirical basis. The exact cognition of the place of each of our feelings in a scale of desirability, measured positively and negatively from a zero of perfect indifference, is an ideal to which we can never tell how closely we approximate. We can, however, guard against known sources of error, and allow for them, at least roughly: correcting in thought the defects of imagination. And since what we require for practical guidance is to estimate not individual past experiences, but the value of a kind of pleasure or pain, as obtained under certain circumstances or conditions; we can to some extent diminish the chance of error in this estimate by making a number of observations and imaginative comparisons, at different times and in different moods. In so far as these agree we may perhaps feel a reasonable confidence in the result: and in so far as they differ, we can at least reduce our possible error by striking an average between the different estimates. It will be evident,

however, after all that has been said, that such a method as this cannot be expected to yield more than a rough approximation to the supposed truth.

But we have by no means exhausted the possible sources of error in that forecast of future pleasures which a reflective egoist naturally makes, and which egoistic Hedonism endeavours to render exact. For no one, in making such a forecast, can or does rely entirely on his own experience: when endeavouring to estimate the probable effect upon his happiness of new circumstances and influences, untried rules of conduct and fashions of life, he inevitably argues from the experience of others. Indeed the most important and anxious deliberations in a man's life, and those in which he most strongly feels the need of making the hedonistic calculation as complete and exact as possible, generally concern changes of conduct recommended solely or chiefly by an inference from the advantages that other men have derived from similar changes. But this inference proceeds on the assumption of a similarity of nature among human beings: an assumption which is never exactly true, while we can never exactly know how much it falls short of the truth: though we have sufficient evidence of the striking differences between the feelings produced in different men by similar causes, to convince us that the assumption would in many cases be wholly misleading. Hence (e. g.) the short method that Plato and others have proposed for deciding the issue between the Philosopher and the Sensualist is palpably fallacious. The philosopher, it is said, has tried both kinds of pleasure, sensual as well as intellectual: and prefers the delights of philosophic life. The sensualist ought therefore to trust his decision and follow his example. But who can tell that the philosopher's constitution is not such as to render the enjoyments of the senses, in his case, comparatively feeble: while on the other hand the sensualist may not be able to attain more than a thin shadow of the philosopher's delight. And so, generally speaking, if we are to be guided by another's experience, we require to be convinced not only of his general accuracy in observing, analysing, and comparing his sensations, but also that his relative susceptibility to the different kinds of pleasure and pain in question coincides with our own. If he is

unpractised in introspective observation, it is possible that he may mistake even the external conditions of his own happiness: and so the communication of his experience may be altogether misleading. But however accurately he has analysed and determined the causes of his feelings, that similar causes would produce similar effects in us must always be uncertain. And the uncertainty is increased indefinitely if he has to recall in memory out of a distant past some of the pleasures or pains to be compared. Thus, for example, in the ever-renewed controversy between Age and Youth, wisdom is not after all so clearly on the side of maturer counsels as it seems to be at first sight. When a youth is warned by his senior to abstain from some pleasure, on the ground of prudence, because it is not worth the possible pleasures that must be sacrificed for it and the future pains that it will entail: it is difficult for him to know how far the elder man can recall—even if he could once feel—the full rapture of the delight that he is asking him to renounce. No doubt we can reduce this liability to error, if we can ascertain how far we and the persons whose experience we wish to appropriate have been similarly influenced by similar circumstances in the past: for so we can infer in what respects our natures are similar to theirs, and in what different: but we can never make this inference complete, and often the requisite comparison is not in our power. And further, this source of error besets us in a more extended and more subtle manner than has yet been noticed. For our sympathetic apprehension of alien experiences of pleasure and pain has been so continually exercised, in so many ways, during the whole of our life, both by actual observation and oral communication with other human beings, and through books and other modes of symbolic suggestion: that it is impossible to say how far it has unconsciously blended with our own experience, so as to colour and modify it when represented in memory. Thus we often overlook the discrepancy between our own experience and that of others, in respect of the importance of certain sources of pleasure and pain, if no sudden and striking disappointment of expectations has forced it on our notice. Only with considerable care and attention can sympathetic persons separate their individual likes and dislikes from those of their associates: and we

can never tell whether this separation has been completely effected.

We must conclude then that our estimate of the hedonistic value of any past pleasure or pain, is liable to an amount of error which we cannot calculate exactly; because the represented pleasantness of different feelings fluctuates and varies indefinitely with changes in the actual condition of the representing mind (or minds in so far as we elect to be guided by others). We have now to observe that, for similar reasons, even supposing we could approximately allow for and so exclude this source of error in our comparison of past pleasures, it is liable to intrude again in arguing from the past to the future. For our capacity for particular pleasures may be about to change, or may have actually changed since the experiences that form the data of our calculation. We may have reached the point of satiety in respect of some of our past pleasures, or otherwise lost our susceptibility to them, owing to latent changes in our constitution: or we may have increased our susceptibility to pains inevitably connected with them: or altered conditions of life may have generated in us new desires and aversions, and given relative importance to new sources of happiness. Or any or all of these changes may be expected to occur, before the completion of the course of conduct upon which we are now deciding. The most careful estimate of a girl's pleasures (supposing a girl gifted with the abnormal habit of reflection that would be necessary) would not much profit a young woman: and the hedonistic calculations of youth require modification as we advance in years.

But again: the practical inference from the past to the future is further complicated by the fact that we can alter ourselves. For it may be that our past experience has been greatly affected by our not being properly attuned to certain pleasures, as e.g. of art, or study, or muscular exercise, or society, or dutiful and beneficent action: or not properly hardened against certain pains, as e.g. toil, or anxiety, or abstinence from luxuries: and there may be within our power some process of training or hardening ourselves which may profoundly modify our susceptibilities. And this consideration is especially important,—and at the same time especially

difficult to deal with—when we attempt to appropriate the experience of others. For we may find that they estimate highly pleasures which we not only have never experienced at all, but which we cannot experience without considerable alteration of our nature. For example, the pleasures of the religious life, the raptures of prayer and praise and the devotion of the soul to God, require (as is commonly said) Conversion or complete change of nature before they can be experienced[1]. And in the same way moral conduct, the performance of duty as such, is disagreeable to the non-moral man when he at first attempts it, but affords to the truly virtuous man a high and severe delight. And so almost all the more refined intellectual and emotional pleasures require training and culture in order to be enjoyed: and since this training does not always succeed in producing any considerable degree of susceptibility, it may always be a matter of doubt for one for whom it would involve sacrifices of other pleasures, whether these sacrifices are worth making.

§ 4. The foregoing considerations must, I think, seriously reduce our confidence in the Empirical method of Egoistic Hedonism. But we have yet to discuss a different kind of objection that has been brought against the practical use of the method.

It is said that the habit of mind necessarily resulting from the continual practice of hedonistic comparison is unfavourable to the attainment of the hedonistic end: because it is incompatible, either (*a*) with any high degree of pleasure generally, or (*b*) with certain kinds of elevated and refined pleasures. And we may further distinguish two grounds for this conclusion: for it may be either (1) the frequent adoption of the introspective attitude of thought, or (2) the predominance of self-love over all other impulses, which is thought to be incompatible with greatest possible happiness[2]. These two, no doubt,

[1] It may be said that these pleasures ought to be left out of the discussion, because they cannot be experienced if they are sought merely as pleasures, from egoistic motives. The objection will be noticed later. Meanwhile I may remark that many religious teachers seem to regard self-love as the ultimately rational principle of action: and others who do not expressly take this view endeavour to influence their disciples by depicting in a vivid manner the pleasures of the religious life.

[2] Perhaps we may say that (*a*) is usually maintained on the ground of (1), and (*b*) on that of (2).

are very commonly blended, but it will be well to examine them separately.

First, then, let us consider what effect habitual reflection or introspection, the continual attention to our pleasures in order to observe their degree of intensity, is likely to have on these pleasures themselves. The inquiry is not an easy one, as it seems to lead us at once to an antinomy or irreconcileable contradiction in our view of pleasure. For if, as was said, pleasure only exists as it is felt, the more conscious we are of it, the more pleasure we have: and the more our attention is directed towards it, the more fully we shall be conscious of it. On the other hand Hamilton's statement that "knowledge and feeling" (cognition and pleasure or pain) are always "in a certain inverse proportion to each other," seems to be in harmony with our experience: for consciousness, in so far as it is purely cognitive, is neither pleasurable nor painful, and the more consciousness is occupied with the one element, the less room there would seem to be for the other.

How then shall we deal with this apparent contradiction? On looking closer at Hamilton's argument we see that his doctrine rests on the assumption that our total consciousness is a constant quantity; so that when one element of it positively increases, the rest must positively diminish. Now there does not appear to be any valid ground for making this assumption: and experience seems to shew that though intense pleasure sometimes impairs momentarily the exercise of our intellectual faculties, at other times it is accompanied with peculiarly keen and vivid observation: so that it is not at any rate impossible that cognition and pleasure should be intensified simultaneously.

Still it seems to be a fact that any very powerful feeling, reaching to the full intensity of which our consciousness is normally capable, is commonly diminished by a contemporaneous stroke of cognitive effort: and indeed it has often been noticed as a difficulty in the way of exact observation of our emotions that the object cognized seems to shrink and dwindle in proportion as the cognitive regard grows keen and eager. How then are we to reconcile this with the proposition first laid down, that pleasure only exists as it is felt? Perhaps we

may say that in so far as we are merely conscious of the feeling, entirely absorbed in the state of pure presentative consciousness, the cognition cannot diminish the feeling of which it is an inseparable concomitant and indispensable condition: but in what we call introspective cognition, we go beyond the present feeling, comparing and classifying it with past feelings: and the effort of representing and comparing these other feelings tends to decrease the mere presentative consciousness of the pleasure.

But this only applies to the attempt to observe and estimate actual present pleasure. We have seen however that this is not the kind of observation likely to furnish us with accurate data for hedonistic calculation: but rather comparison of past pleasures and pains, represented in idea. And hence this objection does not seem to be important. For the observation that Hedonism requires will best be practised during the inevitable intervals of enjoyment: and there is no evidence to shew that it is so unnatural and unhealthy as permanently to incapacitate the mind for the enjoyment of other exercises and impressions.

§ 5. Let us now consider whether the predominance of self-love, and the habit of regarding pleasure as the ultimate end of action, is incompatible with the highest degree either of pleasure generally or of some kinds of pleasure: or even with the more refined and elevated pleasures altogether.

I have had occasion to point out in a previous chapter[1] the difference between the impulses that are, strictly speaking, directed towards pleasure, and the objective, extra-regarding impulses which do not aim at pleasure, though perhaps most of our pleasure consists in the gratification of these, and therefore depends upon their existence. It was there argued that in many cases the two kinds of impulse are so far incompatible that they do not easily coexist in the same moment of consciousness. It was added, however, that in the ordinary condition of our activity the incompatibility is only momentary, and does not prevent a real harmony from being attained by a sort of alternating rhythm of the two impulses in consciousness.

Still it would seem that the normal bent and attitude of our

[1] Book I. c. 4.

minds, in the exercises and pursuits from which the happiness of most of us is derived, is objective, extra-regarding, rather than introspective. The question then is, how far the adoption of the principle of Egoistic Hedonism, and the consequent setting of the Will habitually to aim at pleasure as the ultimately desirable end, is compatible with a healthy and vigorous outflow of those impulses towards external objects and particular activities, the pre-existence of which seems necessary to the attainment of most of our pleasures. The question is not easy to answer decisively. There can be no doubt, I think, that the danger thus indicated, of Egoism defeating itself, is not imaginary: that the concentration of the mind upon pleasure as an object of pursuit tends to diminish the fullness and flavour of the pleasures actually experienced. We may therefore state as generally true, what has been called the Fundamental Paradox of Egoistic Hedonism, that in order to attain the end we must to some extent put it out of sight and not directly aim at it. But though this presents itself as a paradox, there does not seem to be any difficulty in its practical realization, when once the danger indicated is clearly seen. For it is an experience only too common among men, engaged in whatever pursuit, that they let the original end and goal of their efforts pass out of view, and come to regard the means to this end as ends in themselves: so that they at last even sacrifice the original end to the attainment of what is only secondarily and derivatively desirable. And if it be thus easy and common to forget the end in the means overmuch, there seems no reason why it should be difficult to do it to the extent that Rational Egoism prescribes.

It is true that as our desires are not directly under our own control—or at least cannot be produced by an effort of Will, if they can to some extent be repressed by it—if we start with no impulse except the desire of pleasure, it may seem difficult to execute the practical paradox of attaining pleasure by aiming at something else. Yet even on this supposition the difficulty is less than it appears. For the reaction of our activities upon our emotional nature is such that we may commonly bring ourselves to take an interest in any end by concentrating our efforts upon its attainment. So that, even supposing a man

to begin with absolute indifference to everything except his own pleasure, there is no reason to believe that if he were convinced that the possession of other desires and impulses were necessary to the attainment of the greatest possible pleasure, he could not succeed in producing these. But this supposition is never actually realized. Every man, when he commences the task of systematizing his conduct whether on egoistic principles or any other, is conscious of a number of different impulses and tendencies within him, other than the mere desire for pleasure which urge his will in particular directions, to the attainment of particular external results: so that he has only to indulge them and give them free play, he has only to place himself under certain external influences, and these desires and impulses will begin to operate without any effort of will.

This last objection, as I before noticed, has been chiefly taken in the case of certain special impulses: as the love of virtue, or personal affection, or the religious impulse to love and obey God. Now, according to the common view of the virtuous or the benevolent impulse, there would seem to be no more difficulty here than in the case of any particular passion or desire of some external object. And we may notice that none of the school of moralists that followed Shaftesbury in contending that it is man's true interest to foster in himself strictly disinterested social affections, perceive any inherent incompatibility between the existence of these affections and the supremacy of rational self-love. And similarly the Christian preachers before mentioned, who have commended the religious life as really the happiest, have not thought genuine religion irreconcileable with the conviction that each man's own happiness is his most near and intimate concern.

Other persons, however, seem to carry the religious consciousness and the feeling of human affection to a higher stage of refinement, at which a stricter disinterestedness is exacted. They maintain that the essence of either feeling, in its best form, is absolute self-devotion and self-sacrifice. And certainly these seem incompatible with self-love, however cautiously self-limiting. A man cannot both wish to secure his own happiness and be willing to lose it. And yet how if willingness to lose it

is the true means of securing it? Can self-love not merely reduce indirectly its prominence in consciousness, but directly and unreservedly annihilate itself?

This emotional feat does not seem to me possible: and therefore I must admit that a man who embraces the principle of Rational Egoism cuts himself off from the special pleasure that attends this absolute sacrifice and suppression of self. But however exquisite this may be, the pitch of emotional exaltation and refinement necessary to attain it is so comparatively rare, that it is scarcely included in men's common estimate of happiness: and it cannot be said that what are commonly known as the pleasures of virtue, or of benevolence, or of religion, are out of the reach of the Rational Egoist as such.

On the whole, then, I do not think that the common experience of mankind, impartially examined, really sustains the view that Egoistic Hedonism is necessarily suicidal; though it certainly shews a subtle danger attending the most tranquil and rational pursuit of one's own happiness. But the argument drawn from the indefiniteness and uncertainty of hedonistic calculation cannot be denied to have great weight: and if it does not lead us to reject altogether the method of estimating pleasure and pains by empirical-reflective comparison, it at least shews us the desirability of confirming or correcting the results of this comparison by any other method upon which we may find reason to rely.

CHAPTER IV.

HEDONISM AND COMMON SENSE.

§ 1. BEFORE we examine those methods of seeking one's own happiness which are more remote from the empirical, as entirely altering the immediate object of rational aim, and depending on assumptions which carry us into a different sphere of thought; it will be well to consider how far we can avoid the difficulties and uncertainties of the method of reflective comparison, by relying on the current opinions and generally accepted estimates of the value of different pleasures and sources of pleasure. We had occasion to appeal to these at the end of the last chapter, in order to repel a general objection against Egoistic Hedonism: and it may be plausibly said that they express the net result of the combined experience of mankind from generation to generation: in which the divergences due to the limitations of each individual's experience, and the differently tinged moods in which different estimates have been taken, have balanced and neutralized each other and so disappeared.

And no doubt many persons are guided more by common opinion in the direction of their egoistic aims than by any independent reasoning: and probably most of us would be much puzzled if we were suddenly deprived of the guidance of common sense in our pursuit of happiness, and had to rely entirely on the experiences of individuals. When, however, we consider these common opinions as premises for the deductions of scientific egoism, they appear open to the following grave objections.

In the first place Common Sense gives us only, at the best, an estimate true for an average or typical human being: and it is probable that any particular individual will be more or less divergent from this type. In any case, therefore, each person will have to correct the estimate of common opinion by

some other method in order to obtain from it trustworthy guidance for his own conduct. And, secondly, it seems that the experience of the mass of mankind is confined within limits too narrow for its results to be of much avail in the present inquiry. The majority of human beings spend most of their time in labouring to avert starvation and severe bodily discomfort: and the brief leisure that remains to them, after supplying the bodily needs of food, sleep, &c., is spent in ways determined rather by impulse, routine, and habit, than by a deliberate estimate of probable pleasure. It would seem, then, that the common sense to which we here refer is only that of a minority of comparatively rich and leisured persons.

But again, we cannot tell that the mass of mankind, or any section of the mass, is not generally and normally under the influence of some of the causes of mal-observation previously noticed. We avoid the "idola specus" by trusting Common Sense, but what is to guard us against the "idola tribus"? Moreover, the common estimate of different sources of happiness seems to involve all the confusion of ideas and points of view, which in defining the empirical method of Hedonism we have taken some pains to eliminate. In the first place it does not distinguish between objects of natural desire and sources of experienced pleasure. Now we have seen (Bk. I. ch. 4) that these two are not exactly coincident. No doubt we all desire pleasure, and our desires of external objects are in close relation to our experiences of pleasure. But just as they do not seem originally to spring altogether from experiences of pleasure, so neither are they at any period of our life exactly in harmony with the results of such experiences. Indeed we find numerous examples of men who continue not only to feel but to indulge desires, the gratification of which they know by ample experience to be attended with more pain than pleasure. And therefore the current estimate of the desirability of objects of pursuit cannot be taken to express simply men's experience of pleasure and pain: for men naturally think desirable what they strongly desire, and not merely what they have found pleasant: and so the common opinion will rather represent a compromise between the average force of desires and the average experience of the consequences of gratifying them.

We must allow again for the intermingling of moral and æsthetic preferences with the purely hedonistic in the estimate of common sense. For even when men definitely expect greater happiness from the course of conduct which they choose than from any other, it is often because they think it the right, or more excellent, or more noble course: making expressly or tacitly the assumption (which we shall presently have to consider) that the most excellent action will prove to be also the most pleasant.

Again, the introduction of the moral and æsthetic points of view suggests the following doubt. Are we to be guided by the preferences which men avow, or by those which their actions would lead us to infer? On the one hand, we cannot doubt that men often, from weakness of character, fail to seek what they sincerely believe will give them most pleasure in the long run: otherwise all who accept the Christian creed would conform to the Christian code. On the other hand, as a genuine preference for virtuous or refined pleasure is a mark of the man of genuine virtue or refined taste: men who do not really feel such preference are unconsciously or consciously influenced by a desire to gain credit for it, and their express estimate of pleasures is thus modified and coloured.

§ 2. But, even if we had no doubt on general grounds that Common Sense would prove our best guide in the pursuit of happiness, we should still be perplexed by finding its utterances on this topic very deficient in clearness and consistency. I do not mean that they are found to vary from age to age, and from country to country: for there is no improbability in the supposition that men's susceptibilities to pleasure and pain vary in a similar manner. Let us consider only the common opinion of our own age and country. We may perhaps make a list of sources of happiness apparently recommended by an overwhelming *consensus:* as health and good spirits, wealth, fame and social position, power, the enjoyment of society, especially family society, congenial occupation and amusement, including the gratification, in some form, of curiosity, and of those more refined, partly sensual, partly emotional, susceptibilities which we call æsthetic. But if we inquire into the relative value of these objects of common pursuit, we seem to get no clear

answer from Common Sense: unless, perhaps, it would be generally agreed that health ought to be paramount to all other secondary ends: though even on this point we could not infer general agreement from observation of the actual conduct of mankind. Nay, even as regards the positive estimate of these sources of happiness, we find on closer examination that the supposed *consensus* is much less clear than it seemed at first. Not only are there numerous and important bodies of dissidents from the current opinions: but the very same majority, the same Common Sense of Mankind that maintains these opinions, is found in a singular and unexpected manner to welcome and approve the paradoxes of these dissidents. Men shew a really startling readiness to admit that the estimates of happiness which guide them in their ordinary habits and pursuits are erroneous and illusory: and that from time to time the veil is, as it were, lifted, and the error and illusion made manifest.

For, first, men seem to attach great value to the ample gratification of bodily appetites and needs: the wealthier part of mankind spend a considerable amount of money and forethought upon the means of satisfying these in a luxurious manner: and though they do not deliberately sacrifice health to this gratification—common sense condemns that as irrational—yet one may say that they are habitually courageous in pressing forward to the very verge of this imprudence.

And yet the same people are fond of saying that "hunger is the best sauce," and that "temperance and labour will make plain food more delightful than the most exquisite products of the culinary art." And they often argue with perfect sincerity that the rich have really no advantage, or scarcely any advantage, over the comparatively poor, in respect of these pleasures; for habit soon renders the more luxurious provision for the satisfaction of their acquired needs no more pleasant than the appeasing of his more primitive appetites is to the poor man. And the same argument is often extended to all the material comforts that wealth can purchase. It is often contended that habit at once renders us indifferent to these while they are enjoyed, and yet unable to dispense with them without annoyance: so that the pleasures of the merely animal life are no greater to the rich than to the poor, but only more

insecure. And from this there is but a short step to the conclusion, that wealth, in the pursuit of which most men agree in concentrating their efforts, and on the attainment of which all congratulate each other: wealth, for which so many risk their health, shorten their lives, reduce their enjoyments of domestic life, and sacrifice the more refined pleasures of curiosity and art, is really a very doubtful gain: that the cares and anxieties which it entails balance, for most men, the slight advantage of the luxuries which it purchases[1].

And similarly, although social rank and status is, in England, an object of passionate pursuit, yet it is continually said with general approval, that it is of no intrinsic value as a means of happiness: that though the process of ascending from a lower grade to a higher is perhaps generally agreeable, and the process of descending from a higher to a lower certainly painful, yet permanent existence on the loftier level is no more pleasant than on the humbler: that happiness is to be found as easily in a cottage as in a palace (if not, indeed, more easily in the former): and so forth.

Still more trite are the commonplaces as to the emptiness and vanity of the satisfaction to be derived from Fame and Reputation. The case of posthumous fame, indeed, is a striking instance of the general proposition before laid down, that the commonly accepted ends of action are determined partly by the average force of desires that are not directed towards pleasure, nor conformed to experiences of pleasure. For posthumous fame seems to rank pretty high among the objects that common opinion regards as good or desirable for the individual: and the pursuit of it is not ordinarily stigmatized as contrary to prudence, even if it leads a man to sacrifice other important sources of happiness to a result of which he never expects to be actually conscious. Yet the slightest reflection

[1] It is striking to find the author of the *Wealth of Nations*, the founder of that long line of plutologists who are commonly believed to exalt the material means of happiness above all other, declaring that "wealth and greatness are mere trinkets of frivolous utility," and that "in ease of body and peace of mind, all the different ranks of life are nearly upon a level, and the beggar who suns himself by the side of the highway possesses that security which kings are fighting for." Adam Smith, *Moral Sentiments*, Part IV. c. i.

shews such a pursuit to be *primâ facie* irrational[1], from an egoistic point of view; and every moralizer has found this an obvious and popular topic. The actual consciousness of present fame is no doubt very delightful to most persons: still the moralizer does not find it difficult to persuade us that even this is attended with such counterbalancing disadvantages as render its hedonistic value very doubtful.

Again, the current estimate of the desirability of Power is tolerably high, and perhaps the more closely and analytically we examine the actual motives of men, the more widespread and predominant its pursuit will appear: for many men seem to seek wealth, knowledge, even reputation, as a means to the attainment of power, rather than for their own sakes or with a view to other pleasures. And yet men assent willingly when they are told that the pursuit of power, as of fame, is prompted by a vain ambition, never satisfied but only rendered more uneasy by such success as is possible for it: that the anxieties that attend not only the pursuit but the possession of power, and the jealousies and dangers inseparable from the latter, far outweigh its pleasures.

Society of some sort no one can deny to be necessary to human happiness: but still the kind and degree of social intercourse which is actually sought by the more wealthy and leisured portion of the community, with no little expenditure of time, trouble and means, is often declared to yield a most thin and meagre result of pleasure.

We find, no doubt, great agreement among modern moralizers as to the importance of the exercise of the domestic affections as a means of happiness: and this certainly seems to have a prominent place in the plan of life of the majority of mankind. And yet it is difficult to prove that men in general do value domestic life very highly, apart from the gratification of their sensual passions. Certainly whenever and wherever society has been in such a state that men can indulge these

[1] No doubt such a pursuit may be justified to self-love by dwelling on the pleasures of hope and anticipation which attend it. But this is obviously an after-thought. It is not for the sake of those originally that posthumous fame is sought by him whom it spurs

"To scorn delights and live laborious days."

passions and at the same time avoid the burden of a family, without any serious fear of social disapprobation, celibacy has become common: sometimes even so common as to excite the grave anxiety of the legislator. And though such conduct has always been condemned by common sense, it seems doubtful whether it has been condemned as imprudent, and not rather as anti-social.

Thus our examination seems to shew great instability and uncertainty in the most decisive judgments of common sense: since these objects—bodily comfort and luxury, wealth, fame, power, society—are those which common opinion seems most confidently to recommend as sources of pleasure. For though the pleasures derived from Art and the contemplation of the beautiful in Nature, and those of curiosity and the exercise of the intellect generally, are highly prized, it will I think be admitted that they are usually postponed to those above enumerated. And in truth it seems almost impossible to formulate a "common opinion" in respect of these more refined delights. For the very high estimates often set upon them seem to express the real experience of only small minorities. And though these have persuaded the mass of mankind, or that portion of it which is possessed of leisure, to let Culture be regarded as an important source of happiness: they can scarcely be said to have produced any generally accepted opinion as to its importance in comparison with the other sources before mentioned, the pleasures of which are more genuinely appreciated by the majority: still less as to the relative value of different elements of this culture.

But even supposing the *consensus*, in respect of sources of happiness, were far more complete and clear than impartial reflection seems to shew, its value would still be considerably impaired by the dissent of important minorities, which we have not yet noticed. For example, many religious persons regard all the mundane pleasures of which we have been speaking, as not only relatively contemptible, in comparison with the lofty delights of the religious life, but positively mean and trifling, full of vanity and emptiness; so that the pursuit of them is not only occasionally but normally illusory, and leading to bitter disappointment. And a somewhat similar judg-

ment, though from a different point of view, has in all ages been passed by the majority of the class known as Philosophers. And when we consider, as Plato urges, that these latter have paid especial attention to the subject in debate, which the mass of mankind have not done, we shall hesitate to let our conclusion be determined by merely counting heads. On the other hand, as has been already observed, the philosopher's susceptibilities and capacities of feeling do not fairly represent those of humanity in general: and hence if he ventures to erect the results of his individual experience into a universal standard, he is likely to overrate some pleasures and underrate others. Perhaps the most convincing illustrations of this are furnished by thinkers not of the idealist or transcendental type, but professed egoists, such as Epicurus and Hobbes. We cannot accept as fair expressions of the average or common experience of the race either the former's identification of Painlessness with the highest degree of pleasure, or the latter's asseveration that the gratifications of curiosity "far exceed in intensity all carnal delights." Thus we seem to be in this dilemma: the mass of mankind, to whose common opinion we are naturally referred for catholically authoritative beliefs respecting happiness, are deficient in the faculty and the habit of observing and recording their experience: and usually, in proportion as a man is, by nature and practice, a better observer, the phenomena that he has to observe are more and more divergent from the ordinary type.

§ 3. On the whole it must, I think, be admitted that the Hedonistic method cannot be freed from inexactness and uncertainty by appealing to the judgments of common sense respecting the sources of happiness. At the same time I would not exaggerate the difficulty of combining these into a tolerably coherent body of probable doctrine, not useless for practical guidance. For first, it must be observed, that it is only occasionally and to a limited extent that these commonly commended sources of happiness come into competition with one another and are presented as alternatives. For example, the pursuit of wealth often leads also to power (besides the power that lies in wealth) and reputation: and again, these objects of desire can usually be best attained—as far as it is

in our power to attain them at all—by employment which in itself gives the pleasure that normally attends energetic exercise of one's best faculties: and this congenial employment is not incompatible with adequate exercise of the affections, social and domestic: nor with cultivated amusement (which must always be carefully limited in amount if it is to be really amusing). And, as was said, no one doubts that to carry either employment or amusement to a degree that injures health involves a sacrifice of happiness.

And as for the quasi-philosophical paradoxes as to the illusoriness of sensual enjoyments, wealth, power, fame, &c., we may explain the general acceptance which these find by admitting a certain amount of inevitable exaggeration in the common estimates of such objects of desire, which from time to time causes a reaction and an equally excessive temporary depreciation of them. For as we saw (ch. 3) it is natural for men to value too highly the absent pleasures for which they hope and long. It seems clear, for instance, that luxury adds *less* to the ordinary enjoyment of life than most men struggling with penury suppose: there are special delights attending the hard-earned meal, and the eagerly expected amusement, which must be weighed against the profuser pleasures that the rich can command: and so, more generally, we may conclude that while the richer man is on the average happier, yet increase of happiness attends increase of wealth in a rapidly decreasing ratio. Again, power and fame, though probably to most men they bring a clear balance of happiness, are yet certainly attended with anxieties and disgusts which were not foreseen when they were merely represented in longing imagination. And thus happiness, we may suppose, though not "equally distributed through all ranks and callings" (as the eighteenth-century moralists seem generally to have thought), is yet *more* equally distributed than the aspect of men's external circumstances would lead us to infer. Especially if to most persons the pleasures that attend the exercise of the affections are really the most important of all; as these are probably equal on the average in all ranks of life that are raised above griping poverty. Again common sense fully recognises that there are persons of peculiar temperament to whom the com-

moner pleasures of life are really quite trifling in comparison with more refined enjoyments: and also that most men for particular periods are under the sway of absorbing impulses, which take them out of the range within which the judgments of common sense are even broadly and generally valid. No one (e.g.) expects a lover to care much for anything except the enjoyments of love: nor considers that an enthusiast sacrifices happiness in making everything give way to his hobby.

In fact we may say that common sense scarcely claims to provide more than rather indefinite general rules, which no prudent man should neglect without giving himself a reason for doing so. Such reasons may either be drawn from one's knowledge of some peculiarities in one's nature, or from the experience of others whom one has ground for believing to be more like oneself than the average of mankind are. For though, as we saw, there is considerable risk of error in thus appropriating the experience of others—and in fact the expression of it will sometimes appear to be as hesitating and contradictory as the judgments of common sense—we may extract from it counsel sufficiently consistent and authoritative to supplement at least roughly the deficiencies of our own empirical generalizations. Still, by no process of this kind, neither by appealing to the common opinion of the "πολλοί," nor to that of the "χαρίεντες," or of those whom we judge to resemble ourselves, can we hope to solve with anything like precision or certainty the problems of egoistic conduct.

CHAPTER V.

HAPPINESS AND DUTY.

§ 1. AMONG the current opinions as to the sources of happiness, there is one of such peculiar and supreme importance that it seemed best to reserve it for a special and separate examination: the belief, namely, that happiness is best attained by the performance of what is commonly recognised as Duty. It seems undeniable that this is affirmed by the common sense of Christian communities: and indeed of mankind generally, at least after a certain stage in civilisation has been reached. But it is doubtful whether it would be affirmed, among ourselves, as a generalization for experience, and not rather as a matter of direct Divine Revelation, or an immediate inference from the proposition that the world is governed by a perfectly Good and Omnipotent Being: which latter doctrine again is held to be proved either by miraculous Revelation, or the intuitions of Natural Religion, or both combined. To examine thoroughly the validity of the belief in the Moral Government of the World is one of the most important tasks that human reason can attempt: but involving as it does an exhaustive inquiry into the evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion, it could hardly be included within the scope of the present treatise[1]. Here, then, I shall only consider the coincidence of Duty and Happiness in so far as it is maintained by empirical arguments and supposed to be realized in our present earthly life. Perhaps, as so restricted, the coincidence can hardly be said to be "currently believed:" indeed it may be plausibly urged that the reverse belief is implied in the general admission

[1] Such discussion of the question as seemed desirable in such a work as this will be found in the concluding chapter of Book IV.

of the necessity of rewards and punishments in a future state, in order to exhibit and realize completely the moral government of the world. Still, this implication is not strictly necessary: for it may be held that even here virtue is always rewarded and vice punished, so far as to make the virtuous course of action always the most prudent: only that the rewards and punishments are not sufficient to satisfy our sense of justice. Allowing that the virtuous man is often placed on earth in circumstances so adverse that his life is not as happy as that of many less virtuous: it may still be maintained that by virtue he will gain the maximum of happiness that can be gained under these circumstances, all appearances to the contrary notwithstanding. And this view has certainly been held by moralists of reputation on grounds drawn from actual experience of human life: and seems often to be emphatically, though not very definitely, put forward on similar grounds by popular preachers and moralizers. It is therefore necessary, in such an inquiry as the present, to subject this opinion to a careful and complete examination: as, if it be true, the Hedonistic method will coincide to a great extent with the Intuitional: the performance of Duty will absorb the chief part of the Rational Egoist's effort, and only secondarily and within strictly defined limits will he require to aim directly at his own greatest happiness. It may be thought that we ought properly to suspend this inquiry until after we have examined the details of Intuitionism: but it is more convenient to take it now, and perhaps the common notions of Duty will suffice for our present purpose without further definition or analysis: for the preceding chapters will have fully shewn that the generalizations of Hedonism must be established, if at all, by large considerations and decisive preponderances: and that it would be idle in considering a question of this kind to take account of slight differences, and to pretend to weigh in our mental scales comparatively small portions of happiness.

§ 2. Accepting, then, the common division[1] of duties into self-regarding and social, it may be conceded that as far as the

[1] Whatever modifications of this division may afterwards appear to be necessary (cf. Bk. III. c. 7) will, as far as they go, tend to support the conclusions of the present chapter.

first are concerned there is no controversy between Hedonism and Intuitionism: for by "duties towards oneself" are commonly meant acts that tend directly or indirectly to the maintenance or increase of one's happiness. We may therefore confine our attention to the social department of Duty, and consider whether the observance of the moral rules that prescribe certain modes of behaviour towards others will always be attended with a balance of happiness to ourselves.

Here it will be convenient to adopt with some modification the point of view and terminology of Bentham. It has been already observed, that while stating General Happiness as the right and proper end of conduct, Bentham still regarded it as natural and normal for each agent to aim at his own individual happiness. He therefore considered human pleasure (and pain as its negative quantity) from two quite distinct points of view: first as constituting the end and standard of right conduct, and so determining the rules which Bentham and other rational philanthropists would desire to be generally obeyed in any community: and secondly as constituting the motives (whether pleasures or pains) by which each member of the community is or may be induced to conform to these rules. These motives or Sanctions we may classify as External and Internal. The former class will include both "Legal Sanctions," or penalties inflicted by the authority, direct or indirect, of the sovereign: and "Social Sanctions," which are either the pleasures that may be expected from the approval and goodwill of our fellow-men generally, and the services that they will be prompted to render both by this goodwill and by their appreciation of the usefulness of good conduct, or the annoyances and losses that are to be feared from their distrust and dislike. In so far as the happiness earned by virtue comes from internal sources, it will lie in the pleasurable emotion attending virtuous action, or in the absence of remorse, or in some effect on the mental constitution of the agent produced by the maintenance of virtuous habits. It is not merely the intrinsic difference of the sanctions themselves that renders this classification important: but also the fact that the systems of rules to which they are respectively attached may be divergent and even mutually conflicting. For, in the first place, it is obvious that the generally

accepted rules which are supported by the social sanction, forming what is called the Positive Morality of any community, may not only fall short of, but even clash with, the moral intuitions or instincts of any individual member of the community. And even Intuitionists will admit that this may occur in cases where the individual is right and common opinion wrong: for however confidently they may appeal to the universal consent of mankind in favour of the broad principles of Morality, they will not deny that in any actual society one or more of these principles may be partially misapprehended and misapplied: and that this may be apparent to an individual excelling his contemporaries in moral insight. Again, Law and Positive Morality may be at variance. It is true that a law cannot permanently exist, which it is universally thought wrong to obey: for no despot could enforce the penalties of such a law. But there may easily be laws commanding conduct that is considered immoral by some portion of the community, some sect or party that has a public opinion of its own: and any individual may be so much more closely connected with this sect or party than with the rest of the community, that the social sanction may in his case practically operate against the legal.

No doubt in a thoroughly well-ordered state there would be no such conflict of sanctions: Law would always be in harmony with current moral sentiments, and these latter would always be found supporting such rules of behaviour as an enlightened moralist would lay down. And such a state of things, of course, is that to which Benthamites (and other philanthropists) are continually trying to approximate: it is their object so to adjust legal penalties, and influence public opinion, and train and develope the moral habits and social sentiments of each individual, that, as far as possible,

"Each may find his own in all men's good."

What they have therefore to consider is the actual impulsive force of different sanctions on the minds of ordinary men, and how this may be increased or better directed. But the point that we are now investigating is somewhat different: namely, whether these sanctions as at present existing, or rather as empirically cognizable, are sufficient in all cases to determine

a perfectly rational egoist to the performance of social duty. And from this point of view the actual conflict of sanctions is of great importance: for the more stress we lay on either the legal or the social sanctions, the greater difficulty we shall have in proving the coincidence of duty and self-interest in the exceptional cases in which these sanctions are arrayed against duty.

But even if we put this conflict out of sight, it still seems clear that the external sanctions of morality alone are not always sufficient to render immoral conduct also imprudent. We must indeed admit that in an even tolerably well-ordered society, i.e. in an ordinary civilized community in its normal condition, all open crime is folly: and further that it is, generally speaking, the interest of an individual to live in such a state rather than in one more anarchical: so that if all men were perfectly under the control of enlightened self-love, the danger of political disturbances would nearly vanish. For these disturbances inevitably involve so general and widespread a destruction of security and of other means of happiness, that it is improbable that a number of persons sufficient to produce them will ever find their individual interests promoted by so doing. Still, as actual human beings are not all rational egoists, such times of disorder will occur, when Law is in conflict with Law, and a man is in danger of legal penalties for performing his political duty. And we cannot even concede to Hobbes that *under existing circumstances* it is a clear universal precept of Rational Self-love that a man should "seek peace and ensue it:" since some men gain, by the disturbance of society, wealth, fame, and power, to an extent to which in peaceful times they could not hope to approximate: and though there is always some risk involved in this mode of pursuing these goods, it may be reduced to a small amount by a cool and skilful person who has the art of fishing in troubled waters. It may be admitted that this road to success is over-hazardous for prudent persons in tolerably good circumstances. But even these, though they will not assist in producing social disorder, are not likely to make any great sacrifices to avert it: it will often be sufficient for them to defer it, and even when it is imminent prudence may counsel evasion rather than resistance. In short, though a society composed entirely of *rational* egoists

would, when once organized, be in a condition of stable internal equilibrium: it seems very doubtful whether this would be the case with a community of pure egoists, among whom the average degree of enlightenment and self-control was no greater than it is among ourselves.

But at any rate, in the most orderly societies with which we are acquainted, the administration of law and justice is never in so perfect a state as to render *secret* crimes always acts of folly, on the score of the legal penalties attached to them. For however much these may outweigh the advantages of crime, cases must inevitably occur in which the risk of discovery is so small, that on a sober calculation the almost certain gain will more than compensate for the slight chance of the penalty. And finally, in no community is the law actually in so perfect a state that there are not certain kinds of flagrantly anti-social conduct, such as common sense regards as intrinsically criminal, which slip through its meshes and escape legal penalties altogether.

§ 3. It remains to consider how far the social sanction in such cases supplies the defects of the legal. No doubt the hope of praise and liking and services from one's fellowmen, and the fear of forfeiting these and incurring instead blame, aversion, refusal of aid, and social exclusion, are considerations important enough to determine the rational egoist to legal and orderly conduct as a general rule. Still these sanctions are liable to fail just where the legal penalties are defective, although not quite to the same extent. For social penalties are evaded as well as legal by secret crimes: and in times of disturbance, opinions are generally divided, so that a successful criminal has only to incur the disapprobation of a part of the community. It should be observed too that the force of the social sanction diminishes very rapidly, in proportion to the number of dissidents from the common opinion that awards it. Disapprobation that is at once intense and absolutely universal, would be so severe a penalty as perhaps to outweigh any imaginable advantages. For it seems impossible for a human being to live happily, whatever other goods he may enjoy, without the kindly regards of some of his fellows: and so, in contemplating the common philosophic portrait

of the tyrant of old time, who is represented as necessarily suspicious of those nearest him, even of the members of his own family, we feel prepared to admit that such a life must involve the extreme of unhappiness. But when we contemplate the modern tyrannical usurpers, unprovoked conquerors, wicked statesmen, successful rebels, and generally the great criminals whose position raises them out of the reach of legal penalties, though the moral odium under which they lie is in most cases a source of some pain, it does not appear that it must necessarily count for much in an egoistic calculation of the gain and loss resulting from their conduct. For this disesteem is only expressed by a portion of the community: and its utterance is often drowned in the loud-voiced applause of the multitude.

It seems, then, impossible to state generally that the external sanctions of men's legal duties will always be sufficient to identify them with their interests. And a similar assertion would be still more hazardous in respect of that part of Positive Morality which extends beyond the sphere of Law. We may grant that the full force of the social sanction would be sufficient by itself to sustain any moral rule: and no doubt there are many things not punishable by law, which no reasonable man would ever think of doing, on account of the universal disapprobation that he would thereby incur. And there is much weight in what may be called the Principle of Reciprocity, by which certain utilitarians have endeavoured to prove the coincidence of the individual's interests with his social duties. Virtues (they say) are qualities either useful or directly agreeable to others: thus they either increase the market value of the virtuous man's services, and cause others to purchase them at a higher rate and to allot to him more dignified and interesting functions: or they dispose men to please him, both out of gratitude and in order to enjoy the pleasure of his society in return: and again—since man is an imitative animal—the exhibition of these qualities is naturally rewarded by a reciprocal manifestation of them on the part of others, through the mere influence of example. And no doubt the hope of these advantages is an adequate motive for cultivating many virtues and avoiding much vice. Thus on such grounds a rational egoist will generally be strict and punctual in the fulfilment of all his

engagements, and truthful in his assertions, in order to win the confidence of other men; and he will be zealous and industrious in his work, in order to obtain gradually more important and therefore more honourable and lucrative employment: and he will control such of his passions and appetites as are likely to interfere with his efficiency; and will not exhibit violent anger or use unnecessary harshness even towards servants and subordinates; and towards his equals and superiors in rank he will be generally polite and complaisant and good-humoured, and prompt to shew them all such kindness as costs but little in proportion to the pleasure it gives. Still, reflection seems to shew that the conduct recommended by this line of reasoning does not really coincide with moral duty. For, first, what one requires for social success is that one should *appear*, rather than *be*, useful to others: and hence this motive will not restrain one from doing secret harm to others, or even from acting openly in a way that is really harmful, though not perceived to be so. And again, a man is not useful to others by his virtue only, but sometimes rather by his vice: or more often by a certain admixture of unscrupulousness with his good and useful qualities. And further, morality prescribes the performance of duties equally towards all, and that we should abstain as far as possible from harming any: but on the principle of Reciprocity we should exhibit our useful qualities chiefly towards the rich and powerful, and abstain from injuring those who can retaliate; while we shall reasonably omit our duties to the poor and feeble if we find even a slight advantage in so doing. Moreover, some vices (as, for example, many kinds of sensuality and extravagant luxury) do not inflict any immediate or obvious injury on any individual, though they tend in the long run to impair the general happiness: hence no one finds himself personally spurred to check or punish this kind of harm. The result is that there are many acts which, in spite of a decided general opinion that they are wrong, yet do not seem to involve any danger to the immoral agent except that of losing a certain amount of reputation.

We have again to observe that the conflict of codes, which we noticed as an exceptional phenomenon in the case of Law proper, occurs to a greater extent in the case of

Positive Morality. More than one moralist has noticed the discrepancy in modern Europe between the Law of Honour (or the rules maintained by the social sanction of polite persons) and the morality professed in society at large. The discrepancy generally lies in the greater laxity of the former: but in a few instances conflicting duties are prescribed by the two codes, as in the case of duelling. The Law of Honour, however, is by no means the only instance of a special code, divergent in certain points from the moral rules generally accepted in the community where it exists. Most religious sects and parties, and probably the majority of trades and professions, exhibit this phenomenon in some degree. I do not mean merely that special rules of behaviour are imposed upon members of each profession, corresponding to their special social functions and relations: I mean that a peculiar moral opinion is apt to grow up, conflicting to a certain extent with the opinion of the general public. The most striking part of this divergence consists generally in the approval or excusal of practices disapproved by the current morality: as (e.g.) license among soldiers, bribery among politicians in certain ages and countries, unveracity of various degrees among priests and advocates, fraud in different forms among tradesmen. In such cases there are generally strong natural inducements to disobey the stricter rule (in fact it would seem to be to the continual pressure of these inducements that the relaxation of the rule has been due): while at the same time the social sanction is weakened to such an extent that it is sometimes hard to say whether it outweighs a similar force on the other side. For a man who conforms to the general code, if he does not actually meet with contempt and aversion from those of his calling, is at least liable to be called eccentric and fantastic. And this is still more the case, if by conformity to the generally received rule he foregoes advantages not only to himself but to his relatives or friends or party. Very often this professional or sectarian excusal of immorality of which we are speaking is not so clear and explicit as to amount to the establishment of a rule, conflicting with the generally received rule: but is still sufficient to weaken indefinitely the social sanction in favour of the latter. More generally, we may almost say that

in most civilized societies there are two different degrees of positive morality, both maintained in some sort by common consent; a stricter code being publicly taught and avowed, while a laxer set of rules is privately admitted as the only code which can be supported by social sanctions of any great force, such as strong dislike or exclusion from social intercourse. By refusing to conform to the stricter code a man only loses, as was before said, a certain kind of reputation. Now it is difficult to estimate generally the relative hedonistic value of reputation as compared with other sources of pleasure: it no doubt varies very much with different individuals: but at any rate we may say that there are many men whose happiness does not appear to depend on the approbation or disapprobation of the moralist, and of mankind in general in so far as they support the moralist. "Virtus laudatur et alget:" and it does not seem to be prudent to purchase this praise by any great sacrifice of other goods, except in the case of persons peculiarly sensitive to the pleasures and pains of reputation.

§ 4. We must conclude, then, that if the conduct prescribed by Conscience or the Moral Faculty can be shewn to coincide with that which Egoistic Hedonism would dictate, it must be, in many cases, on the score of the internal sanctions only: and that, even when there is no actual conflict between the conscience of the individual agent and the law or positive morality of the community to which he belongs. In considering the force of these sanctions, we have first to distinguish those pleasures and pains which are properly moral from those which lie in the anticipation of rewards and punishments in a future life: as the two seem to be blended in what are commonly known as the satisfactions of a good conscience or the pangs of remorse. For as we are now supposing the calculations of Rational Egoism to be performed without taking into account any feelings that are not empirically ascertainable, we must in consistency exclude also the pleasurable or painful anticipations of such feelings.

If, then, we contemplate by itself the satisfaction that attends the performance of duty as such (without taking into consideration any ulterior consequences), and the pain that follows on its violation, we cannot doubt that they are sufficiently

intense to constitute very powerful motives with some minds. At the same time, though the preceding discussions will have shewn the great difficulty of weighing exactly these pleasures and pains against others, there are very strong grounds for believing that they are not sufficiently intense to turn the balance of prospective happiness always in favour of duty. This will be most easily seen if we take an extreme case, which is yet quite within the limits of experience. The call of duty may impel a soldier or other public servant, or a member of a political party in civil strife, or a member of a persecuted sect, to face certain and painful death, under circumstances where it might be avoided with little or no loss even of reputation. In order to constitute such conduct reasonable, we have to assume that in all cases where such a duty could exist, or at least be recognized, the moral pain that would follow on evasion of duty would be so great as to render the whole remainder of life hedonistically worthless. Surely such an assumption would be extravagant and paradoxical. It rather appears that while the majority of persons in any society are generally able to discern their duty (according to the code and standard currently accepted in their society), the number of those in whom the moral feelings taken alone form a preponderant or even important element of happiness is by no means large. A striking evidence of this is furnished by those Christian writers of the last century who treat the *moral* unbeliever as a fool who sacrifices his happiness both here and hereafter. These men were, for the most part, earnestly engaged in the practice of virtue, and yet this practice had not made them love virtue so much as to prefer it, for its own sake, to mere sensual enjoyment. Still less then can we believe that, in the case of persons who have not developed and strengthened by habit their virtuous impulses, the pain that might afterwards result from resisting the call of duty would be sufficient to neutralize all other sources of pleasure. And even if we take more ordinary cases, where a man is called on to give up, for virtue's sake, not life, but a considerable share of the ordinary sources of human happiness; can we say that all, or even most men are so constituted that the satisfactions of a good conscience are certain to repay them for such sacrifices?

And perhaps so much as this has scarcely ever been expressly maintained. What Plato in his most famous treatise, and others since Plato, have rather tried to prove, is not that at any particular moment duty will be, to every one on whom it may devolve, productive of more happiness than any other course of conduct: but rather that the life of the virtuous man will always be on the whole intrinsically the happiest. But even this it is very difficult even to render probable: as will appear, I think, if we examine the lines of reasoning by which it is commonly supported.

To begin with Plato's argument, which seems to have found no little acceptance, even in modern times. He represents the soul of the virtuous man as a well-ordered polity of impulses, in which every passion and appetite is duly obedient to the rightful sovereignty of reason, and operates only within the limits laid down by the latter. He then contrasts the tranquil peace of such a mind with the disorder of one where an alternation of baser impulses, or some ruling passion, lords it over reason: and asks which is the happiest, even apart from external rewards and punishments. But we may grant all that Plato claims, and yet be no further advanced towards the solution of the question before us. For here the issue does not lie between Reason and Passion, but rather—in Butler's language—between Rational Self-love and Conscience. We are supposing the Egoist to have all his impulses under control, and are only asking how this control is to be exercised. Now we have seen that the regulation and organization of life to attain the end of self-interest appears *primâ facie* divergent at certain points from that to which men in general are prompted by a sense of duty. In order to maintain Plato's position it has to be shewn that this appearance is false: and that a system of self-government, which under certain circumstances leads us to pain, loss, and death, is still that which self-interest requires. It can scarcely be said that our nature is such that only this latter kind of regulation is possible: that the choice lies between this and none at all. It is easy to imagine a rational egoist, strictly controlling each of his passions and impulses—including his moral and social sentiments—within such limits that its indulgence should not involve the sacrifice of some greater

gratification: and experience seems to shew us many examples of persons who at least approximate as closely to this type, as any one else does to the ideal of the ordinary moralist. Hence it would seem that if the regulation according to the notions of duty be really the best means to the individual's happiness, it must be on account of the specific emotional pleasure that attends the indulgence of the moral sentiments, and the specific pain consequent on their repression and violation.

Here, however, a fundamental difficulty suggests itself, which must be removed before we can proceed further. If a man thinks it reasonable to seek his own interest, it is clear that he cannot himself disapprove of any conduct that comes under this principle or approve of the opposite. And hence it may appear that the pleasures and pains of conscience cannot enter into the calculation whether a certain course of conduct is or is not in accordance with Rational Egoism, because they cannot attach themselves in the egoist's mind to any modes of action, which have not been already decided, on other grounds, to be reasonable or the reverse. The truth is that we have here to recur to the distinction (indicated in Book I. ch. 3) between the general impulse to do what is reasonable as such, and special sentiments of liking or aversion for special kinds of conduct, independent of their reasonableness. In the moral sentiments as they exist in ordinary men, these two kinds of feeling are indistinguishably blended: because it is commonly believed that the rules of conduct to which the common moral sentiments are attached are in some way or other reasonable. We can however conceive the two separated: and in fact we have experience of such separation whenever a man is led by a process of thought to adopt a different view of morality from that in which he has been trained: for in such a case there will always remain in his mind some quasi-moral likings and aversions, no longer sustained by his deliberate judgment of right and wrong. And thus we may believe that most men, however firmly they might adopt the principles of Egoistic Hedonism, would still feel sentiments of preference and aversion for certain kinds of conduct, prior to any conclusion that the actions prompted by such senti-

ments were reasonable and right. It may be thought that such feelings are likely to dwindle and decay, when once a man has definitely embraced the principle of Egoism. But it does not seem that this will necessarily be the case with ethical any more than with æsthetic sentiments: both may be cultivated for the sake of the pleasure that they directly afford: and such cultivation seems especially easy in the case of sentiments prompting to the performance of social duty: as these are sure to be, for the most part, powerfully sustained and echoed by the sympathy of others. And since it is agreed that the conduct commonly recognised as virtuous is *generally* coincident with that which enlightened self-love would dictate, a rational egoist's habits of conduct will be such as naturally to foster these moral or quasi-moral sentiments. The question therefore before us is not whether the Egoist should cherish and indulge these feelings up to a certain point—which all would admit; but whether he should allow them to grow to such a pitch that they will always prevail over the strongest opposing considerations: whether, in fact, he should give them the rein and let them carry him whither they will. We have already seen ground for believing that Rational Self-love will best attain its end by limiting its conscious operation and allowing free play to disinterested impulses: but we are now asked to accept the further paradox that it is reasonable for it to abdicate its supremacy altogether over some of these impulses.

It must be admitted that this paradox has often been urged with much rhetorical persuasiveness: indeed it might almost be called a common-place of moral rhetoricians. We are told, for example, that 'virtue must not be wooed with a divided heart;' that 'her true worth is never revealed to the huckstering spirit who would weigh her in the scales against alien pleasures.' More definitely, it seems to be held that there is so great a difference in respect of pleasure between the emotions attendant upon such virtuous or quasi-virtuous habits as are compatible with adhesion to egoistic principles, and the raptures that attend the unreserved and passionate surrender of the soul to virtue; that it is really a man's interest to encourage in himself this passionate and enthusiastic strain of sentiment, although under certain circumstances it must necessarily lead

him to act in a manner which, considered by itself, would be undoubtedly imprudent.

But when we look closer at the matter, it seems in the first place to be very doubtful whether the abdication of reason that is here contemplated is even possible to a sane mind. A man may, no doubt, resolve that he will devote himself unreservedly to the practice of virtue, without any consideration of what appears to him to be his interest: he may perform a series of acts in accordance with this resolution, and these may gradually form in him strong habitual tendencies to acts of a similar kind. But it does not seem that these habits of virtue can ever become so strong as to gain irresistible control over a reasonable will. When the occasion comes on which virtue demands the last extreme sacrifice, the agent must always be able to deliberate afresh, and to act (as far as the control of his will extends) without reference to his past actions. But suppose that it is possible so to surrender the will to the sway of moral enthusiasm: or else that it is possible to cultivate virtuous sentiments of such preponderant strength, that in every possible case more pleasure or less pain will result from yielding to them than from any other course of action: it must surely be admitted that there are comparatively few men in whom morality has reached anything like this pitch of development: and it is not evident that even they have attained thereby the maximum of happiness open to them. We may, however, believe this to be the case with persons of special moral susceptibilities. But as far as the great majority of mankind are concerned, experience would lead us to suppose that they are so constituted as to feel far more keenly pleasures (and pains) arising from some other source than the conscience: either from the gratifications of sense, or from the possession of power and fame, or from strong human affections, or from the pursuit of science, art, &c.: so that in their case perhaps no training could succeed in giving to the moral feelings the requisite predominance. And even if we grant that it is each one's interest to develope his moral susceptibilities as far as possible, still, so long as they are actually less developed, it is clearly not his interest to make extreme sacrifices for the fulfilment of duty.

To sum up. Although the performance of duties towards others and the exercise of social virtue seems to be *generally* the best means to the attainment of the individual's happiness, and it is easy to exhibit this coincidence between Virtue and Happiness rhetorically and popularly: still, the more carefully we analyse and estimate the consequences of Virtue to the virtuous agent, the more improbable does it appear that this coincidence is complete and universal. We may conceive the coincidence becoming perfect in a Utopia where men were as much in accord on moral as they are now on mathematical questions, where Law was in perfect harmony with Moral Opinion, and all offences were discovered and duly punished: or we may conceive the same result attained by intensifying the moral sentiments of all members of the community, without any external changes (which indeed would then be unnecessary). But just in proportion as existing societies and existing men fall short of this ideal, rules of conduct based on the principles of Egoistic Hedonism must diverge from those which most men are accustomed to recognise as prescribed by Duty and Virtue[1].

[1] Utilitarians may think that in the above discussion sufficient stress has not been laid on Sympathy with the pleasures and pains of others: holding that it is this, rather than the moral feelings proper, which supplies a really effective stimulus to the performance of social duty. My own view is that these two kinds of internal sanction are inextricably blended in our ordinary moral consciousness: and the argument above given seems equally applicable, *mutatis mutandis*, to whichever element is regarded as most important. It will be desirable, however, to undertake a further examination of Sympathy, as a specially Utilitarian sanction, in the concluding chapter of Book IV.: to which accordingly the reader may refer.

CHAPTER VI.

OTHER FORMS OF THE EGOISTIC METHOD.

§ 1. It remains to ask whether there be any other valid method of determining what conduct will be attended with the greatest excess of pleasure over pain, so as to dispense with the continual reference to empirical results, which it has been found so difficult to estimate with accuracy.

This question, as was noticed in chap. 1, has been answered affirmatively in several different ways. Among these answers we have already noticed the most important, as lying beyond the range of our present inquiry: those, namely, that recommend the Egoist to conform to certain codes of Divine Law, in the belief that he will thus secure his greatest happiness in another state of existence—for that the rewards of religious obedience in this life are always adequate, is a proposition which probably no one would now maintain to be a certain theological deduction. Nor, again, can we admit without verification the proposition which some philosophers, including Aristotle (and Plato in some passages), seem to assume *à priori:* that the kind of feeling which is most pleasant or preferable as feeling, will always accompany the kind of activity which we approve, or which we rank highest in some scale of excellence, determined by an appeal to moral or æsthetic intuition. The extent of this assumption seems to have been concealed from the ancient thinkers by the ambiguity of the term "good," signifying as it does both the object of desire generally and the object of moral approbation: but when once the ambiguity is clearly seen, the assumption cannot be admitted as valid. The proposition, that conformity to moral rules, intuitions or instincts, is the course of action which tends to produce the agent's own

greatest happiness, must be referred to the test of expressions: and this, as we have seen, does not support it[1]. And, to speak more generally, it will probably be now admitted that there is no universal connexion between Pleasure (or Pain) and any other psychical or physical phenomenon, discoverable by any process of *à priori* reasoning. Hence the problem of attaining the individual's greatest happiness, if treated scientifically, must be investigated by a method of which the ultimate premises are facts of empirical observation.

§ 2. Is there then any general law of the inseparable antecedents or concomitants of pleasure, established on so firm a basis of induction that it may be safely used deductively in the pursuit of our own greatest happiness?

Such a law seems to be affirmed by Mr Herbert Spencer in constructing a system of this kind: a system which, while it states Happiness as the ultimate end of Conduct, yet rejects the method of Empirical Hedonism on account of its difficulties and uncertainties. This theory I will give, as far as possible, in Mr Spencer's own words[2].

"It is from the activity of one or more of the faculties that all gratification arises. To the healthful performance of each function of mind or body attaches a pleasurable feeling. And this pleasurable feeling is obtainable only by the performance of the function: that is, by the exercise of the correlative faculty. Every faculty in turn affords its special emotion: and the sum of these constitutes happiness."

"Or the matter may be put briefly thus, desire is the need for some species of sensation. A sensation is producible only by the exercise of a faculty. Hence no desire can be satisfied except through the exercise of a faculty. But happiness consists in the due satisfaction of all the desires: that is, happiness consists in the due exercise of all the faculties."

[1] It may be worth observing that neither the acceptance of the religious belief nor of the ethical assumption above mentioned would render the present inquiry unimportant to us. For the code of common-sense morality—which forms part of the code of most religions—allows within limits the pursuit of our own happiness and prescribes the promotion of the happiness of others: and so far leaves us as much concerned as before to ascertain the best means of attaining happiness.

[2] *Social Statics*, c. 4, § 1.

It might perhaps be supposed from this passage taken by itself that Mr Spencer was thinking exclusively of *active* pleasure: the "reflex," as Hamilton terms it, of exertion of some kind. But as he has before said that "all affections of consciousness are received" through "what are called faculties," we must understand him to use the term "faculty" relatively to passive as well as active consciousness; as including, therefore, what are more commonly known as "capacities" (or "susceptibilities") of feeling[1]. So interpreted, the assertion that "man's happiness can only be produced by the exercise of his faculties" is manifestly true: as all his feelings, pleasurable and painful alike, depend upon the exercise of some faculty or other. But Mr Spencer continues[2]: "to exercise his faculties he must have liberty to do all that his faculties naturally impel him to do...therefore he has a *right* to that liberty" (limited only, as Mr Spencer proceeds to explain, by the equal right of others to similar liberty). Here the ethical step taken is very important. It is almost an insignificant proposition to say that "happiness consists in the exercise of our faculties:" since, as we are not directly cognizant of our faculties, but only of the mental phenomena which result from their exercise, this amounts to little more than saying that happiness consists in feeling of some kind. But the further conclusion, that our happiness will be produced by "liberty to do all that our faculties naturally impel us to do," seems to require the assumption that our faculties will never impel us to do things that will cause us more pain than pleasure. Mr Spencer does not, of course, venture upon this paradox: he admits that a man who has perfect liberty to exercise his faculties (limited only by the equal freedom of others), may use this liberty in a manner injurious to himself. But he maintains[3] that "when

[1] We might obtain an equivalent extension of meaning in a different way, by exchanging the *psychological* point of view for the *physiological*. For every feeling is believed to be preceded or accompanied by a process which may be called [corporeal] action: by the movement, that is, of some particles in some organ of the body. But in the case of emotional pleasures the essential part of the physiological phenomenon is so obscure, that it seems better to direct our attention to the psychological.

[2] *Social Statics*, c. 4, § 2.

[3] *loc. cit.* § 5.

we set about drawing practical deductions" from this admission, "we find ourselves involved in complicated estimates of pleasures and pains:" and that in such calculations "trustworthy inferences are only attainable in a minority of cases." For "in the first place, we frequently cannot say whether the bad results will exceed the good ones: and, in the second place, we frequently cannot say whether the faculties on which suffering will be inflicted are in normal or abnormal states. For example, though it is very manifest that drunkenness is an injurious exercise of faculties, as being clearly productive of more pain than pleasure, it is by no means manifest how much work is proper for us, and when work becomes detrimental: it is by no means manifest where lies the line between due and undue intellectual activity: it is by no means manifest what amount of advantage will justify a man in submitting to unsuitable climate and mode of life: and yet in each of these cases happiness is at stake, and the wrong course is wrong for the same reason that drunkenness is so." Hence, though we must accept, in the abstract, the principle that a limitation of liberty is necessary to the complete attainment of happiness: still this principle "does not admit of scientific development[1]."

If then we cannot ascertain, by inference from past experiences, when our impulses ought to be checked: by what method can we attain or approximate to the happiness which we seek? We seem to be in a dilemma. We are continually experiencing the ill effects of misdirected impulses: and yet Mr Spencer will not allow the possibility of gaining from experience such knowledge as will enable us to control and direct them rightly. Or rather, as we have seen, he allows this possibility in simple cases, where the gratification of impulse results in an obvious balance of pain over pleasure (as in the instance

[1] I have omitted one element of uncertainty in the hedonistic calculation on which Mr Spencer lays stress. He argues that actions productive of a balance of suffering to the individual may still be beneficial to the race: as they may be in the right line of development, and have the effect of bringing mankind somewhat nearer the ideal type by the realization of which their greatest happiness will be secured. I have omitted this, because it is urged from the point of view of Universalistic and not of Egoistic Hedonism: and Mr Spencer seems to regard the arguments given in the text as sufficient to prove his conclusion.

of drunkenness): but these cases, he thinks, are a minority. In the more frequent cases where the considerations are more complex, he seems to consider that the only course is to exercise our faculties freely in obedience to impulse: "for although it may be impossible in such cases for the intellect to estimate the respective amounts of pleasure and pain consequent upon each alternative, yet will experience enable the constitution itself to do this: and will further cause it instinctively to shun that course which produces on the whole most suffering—or, in other words, most sins against the necessities of existence—and to choose that which least sins against them." In short, Reason is to abdicate in favour of Instinct: the unconscious registration of pleasurable and painful experiences, which "in virtue of the law of adaptation" our organisms are continually performing, is to be preferred as more likely to lead us to happiness than any deliberate collection and comparison of these experiences.

Now it is one thing to affirm generally that all organisms tend to adapt themselves to their environment: and quite another thing to maintain that in the human organism one particular kind of adaptation, that which proceeds by unconscious modification of instinct, is better than that other kind of adaptation which is brought about by conscious comparison and inference. By what evidence is this proposition to be proved? For it is clear, in the first place, that it can only be justified by a comparison of the consequences of yielding to impulse with the consequences of controlling them by calculations of resulting pleasure and pain: that is, by the very method of which the comparative untrustworthiness is sought to be proved. We require then, at least, a very wide induction from those clear and simple cases in which Mr Spencer allows the intellect to be capable of deciding between the amounts of happiness consequent respectively on two alternatives of conduct. If in the great majority of clear instances where impulse conflicts with rational forecast, a subsequent calculation of consequences appears to justify impulse, we might admit Mr Spencer's conclusion: for though no method can be logically applied to demonstrate its own absolute untrustworthiness, it may perhaps be fairly used to make its own comparative invalidity probable. Mr Spencer, however, adduces no such array

of instances: on the other hand, he concedes to Common Sense that in many cases Impulse alone would clearly lead us wrong, clearly needs to be controlled by prudential calculations. Nor is it relevant to urge that, in other animals, the organism is continually adapted to its environment through the unconscious modification of Instinct by experience. For the extent of the analogy between such animals and man is just the point at issue. It would be maintained on the other side that even in brutes, requiring as they do a far less complex adaptation to circumstances, the results of the unconscious process are imperfect: that conscious comparison and prudential forecast may be regarded as the natural substitute for and development of this unconscious adaptation in the more highly organized brain of man, related to far. more complicated conditions of existence: that these comparisons and forecasts, again, become in their final form and most complete development the calculations of systematic hedonism which we have been examining: and that in proportion as Reason is developed the instincts that remain naturally sink into a subordinate place, and become more and more feeble and fallible guides. Indeed in many cases a man who took the resolution to rely on Instinct would simply surrender his will to a complicated conflict of wavering and alternating impulses, leading to the most ineffective fitfulness and fluctuation in external conduct. In short, it is so paradoxical to put forward, as the *dernier mot* of ethical philosophy, a negation of the natural supremacy of Reason over impulse; that I am perhaps wrong in understanding Mr Spencer to take up so extreme a position[1]. But I have examined the paradox carefully, because it only expresses, in an extreme form, a view to which many minds are led in a natural reaction from con-

[1] My difficulty in representing Mr Spencer's argument is due to the fact noticed in the preceding note: that it is conducted from the point of view of Universalistic Hedonism. What Mr Spencer is concerned to prove is that a scientific deduction of the proper secondary limitations of individual liberty (as contrasted with its great primary limitation by the equal freedoms of other individuals) is impossible on the assumption of Universal Happiness as the ultimate end. It is only a portion of his argument that applies equally from the Egoistic point of view: and though he appears to me to regard this portion, taken by itself, as adequate to justify his distrust of Empirical Hedonism, I am not quite sure that he would deliberately maintain this position.

templating the perplexities and uncertainties of systematic hedonism, which we have discussed in chapters 3 and 4. And further, the paradox is not without some practical utility: since it contains, like so many other paradoxes, the exaggeration of an important truth. It is, perhaps, an error characteristic of the majority of philosophers in all ages to despise or neglect too much the leadings of natural instinct. No doubt the existence of a strong impulse ought always to be counted as an important element in deciding what course of conduct is likely to promote our happiness. And in estimating its importance we have not only to consider the pleasure to be gained by satisfying it, and the pain of ungratified desire; but also the *general* adaptation of our impulsive or appetitive nature to the circumstances of our life, and the consequent probability that the impulse is prompting us to an act which will be productive of happiness in other ways than by its own gratification. If our prudential comparison, apart from this latter consideration, gives an uncertain result, this consideration may reasonably turn the scale in favour of impulse. And further, experience, as interpreted by Common Sense, seems to declare that there are certain departments of life, in which instinct is on the whole a safer guide than prudential calculation. The intrusion of Prudence into these regions appears therefore to be suicidal: and we are led by a different road to the conclusion previously stated, that Rational Egoism is naturally and necessarily self-limiting. Still, this will not lead us to substitute any other method for that of Empirical Hedonism: as there seems no satisfactory mode of determining the limits to which prudential calculation may prudently be carried, except by this very calculation itself.

§ 3. I have left till the last one important reason why the state of our desires at any given time is an imperfect indication of the possibilities of pleasure open to us. It is not uncommon to find that we derive an important part of our happiness from activities and passive experiences towards which we originally felt no instinctive prompting. In such cases we often say that the faculty or capacity was there from the first, though latent: it did not express its presence in any conscious need of exercise: it required to be developed by actions and experiences

which were originally indifferent or even irksome. Hence we see that "the exercise of all our faculties," which Mr Spencer declares to constitute happiness, may mean something quite different from the gratification of all our desires.

And thus we are led to conceive another deductive method for attaining our greatest possible happiness, quite different from that last discussed. Starting with the same principle, that "happiness consists in the due exercise of all our faculties," we may infer, not that we ought in the pursuit of happiness to give free play to all natural impulses, but that we ought to ascertain the sum total of our faculties and capacities, and the relative importance of each: and endeavour, in arranging our life, to provide for the completest possible exercise of all. Here the reader may be reminded of the ambiguity latent in the term Egoism, which was noticed in a previous chapter[1]. It was there observed that Egoism might mean not only (what it is ordinarily understood to mean) the doctrine of Egoistic Hedonism, but also the doctrine that Self-development or Self-realization ought to be taken as the ultimate end of action. We now see that this latter end may be put forward as theoretically subordinate to the former, while practically substituted for it as a first principle for determining right conduct. Happiness being accepted as the ultimate end, it may be held that we should seek it indirectly, aiming directly at self-development.

Before considering whether happiness is likely to be attained in this way, let us ask ourselves what the self is which we are to attempt to develope, and how we are to know it. How can we ascertain at any time the sum of our faculties and capacities? In so far as they correspond to bodily organs they may be partly inferred from these: but this inference can carry us but a very little way: not so far as a slight reflection on a brief portion of experience. We could perhaps infer from an examination of the human body the number of our senses, by observing the peculiar systems of nerves connected with the different organs of sense: but we could not predict the corresponding actual sensations without specific experience. And all attempts, even with the utmost aid

[1] 1, § 7.

from experience, to connect with cerebral characteristics our different emotional susceptibilities or our powers of performing different intellectual processes (or even the more delicate and complex bodily movements) have as yet failed. Indeed, it seems that as regards the latter the notion of *acquisition* is really more appropriate than that of development: because the permanent possibilities of action, and even of passive feeling, which seem to constitute my present "self" or mind, in so far as it is something definitely charactered and cognizable as like or unlike other minds, appear to be greatly due to my own previous actions and feelings, and are still capable of being modified by my own efforts and the influence of external circumstances. "I" am now a being possessed of certain bodily dexterities and powers of intellectual apprehension and production: but no one doubts that a different training and course of life would have given me equal dexterities of a quite different kind, and rendered my intellect competent to deal with quite other matters of thought as easily as it now deals with those with which I am most conversant. And similarly, though to a less degree, different experiences would have produced in me different emotional susceptibilities and habits of desire. Hence, in using the notion of "self-development" we must carefully exclude the apparent implication that we are beings with perfectly definite potentialities which we have only the alternatives of developing or not developing. We are not born such beings, nor does it seem that we ever become such. The "self" of each (meaning by the term his particular character and intellect) is never more than partially determinate: it may always be "developed" further in a number of different ways, though no doubt these appear to be confined within limits that, as life advances, are drawn continually closer.

How then can this notion help us to determine what line of conduct we ought to adopt? How shall we decide, when alternatives of conduct are presented to us, which is the one most calculated to "develope self"?

Perhaps it may seem that the course of conduct which produces most effect on the whole must be that by which the agent is most developed. And probably most results of importance in human affairs are produced by sustained effort, in which

the agent's latent energy is fully called out. Still (even if we had a satisfactory criterion for comparing the different magnitudes of different effects) we cannot strictly infer from greatness in the effect greatness, or fulness of development, in one of its causes: and the human agent is in every case only one cause among many. There are some circumstances under which a slight action in one direction may produce more effect than a great effort in another: as in a quarry, when a mine is laid, one may move more stone by momentarily pulling a trigger than one could by hacking and dragging rocks all day long. And in fact it not seldom happens in life that the line of most effective action is not that which seems to conduce most to self-development. Suppose a man of æsthetic or speculative bent, upon whom circumstances have thrown important practical responsibilities: on the one hand he may know that his practical work, though distasteful to him, is work which he can do, and which would be neglected or left undone if he did not do it: and on the other hand his services to Art or Thought may be of very second-rate importance: but he may still feel that the poetic or philosophic life would draw out his latent energies far more than the mere mechanical routine of business.

What, then, is the true criterion of the greatest possible drawing out or development of latent faculties and capacities? Shall we say that it is found in "intensity of consciousness" or "fullness of life"? Certainly the self in each of us seems to be most actual, most realized, at the times when consciousness is fullest and most intense: and we recognise great variations in this intensity: indeed we seem able to trace the heightening of life or consciousness, through different degrees, from a point not much above zero up to the state when powerful emotional excitement is sustaining the most energetic action of which our system is capable. Thus interpreted, then, the principle of self-development directs us to place ourselves under such conditions as will render our feelings most intense and our actions most energetic.

Now, of course, if consciousness be pleasurable in quality, the more intense it is, the greater will be the pleasure: but the mere intensity does not make it pleasurable. We experience intense pains as well as intense pleasures, and in those "full

tides of soul," in which we seem to live most and be most developed, painful consciousness may be mixed in almost any proportion. And we may observe that pain (including that distress of mind which results from the prescience of worse pains to come) stimulates to energetic action no less than pleasure actual or prospective: and though the action to which it prompts operates somewhat as an anodyne, this does not prevent the total consciousness from being intensely painful.

And even if we exclude distinctly painful consciousness from the notion of self-development (which is surely arbitrary), we still cannot say that consciousness tends to be pleasurable in proportion to its intensity. For we often experience excitement nearly or quite neutral in quality (i.e. not distinctly pleasurable or painful), which reaches a great pitch of intensity, as in the case of strong desire or vigorous action for an end of which the attainment remains quite uncertain. Indeed a large portion of reflective mankind have placed their ideal of happiness at the opposite pole to this excited or agitated consciousness: in "apathy," "unperturbedness,"

> "Divine Tranquillity
> Without one pleasure and without one pain;"

which sometimes, as in the Buddhist Nirwâna, becomes scarcely distinguishable from absolute insensibility. In order, therefore, to exhibit Self-development as clearly a means to the end of happiness, we must alter our definition of it, and say that self is most developed when our consciousness in so far as pleasurable is most intense. But in this way the notion of Pleasure or Happiness is made the criterion of Development, instead of the latter guiding us to the former: and we are brought round again to the old method of Empirical Hedonism, for which we have been trying to find a substitute.

But again, it may be said that true self-development consists not merely in a life where consciousness is intense: we must add the condition that all our different faculties or capacities are harmoniously developed: that we cultivate all sides of our nature. For a man may live a very intense life if he be passionately devoted to field-sports or beetles, or the service of his country or of his religion: but—it may be said—he would be happier if he exercised other faculties and capacities, if he

added intellectual to physical activity, artistic to scientific interests, domestic affections to patriotism, &c. &c. And experience certainly seems to support the view that men lose happiness by allowing some of their faculties or capacities to be withered and dwarfed for want of exercise, and thus not leaving themselves sufficient variety of feelings or activities. And the analogy of bodily health supports this view: for it seems that health is difficult to maintain unless we duly exercise each of the different organs of the body. Still, it would appear that the harmony of functions necessary to health is a very elastic one, and admits of a very wide margin of variation, as far as the organs under voluntary control are concerned. A man (e. g.) who exercises his brain alone will probably be ill in consequence: but he may exercise his brain much and his legs little, or *vice versâ*, without any morbid results: and he may even repeat monotonously one short series of movements for the greater part of his waking life (as some workers in factories do) without any apparent injury to health. And, in the same way, we cannot lay down the proposition, that a varied and many-sided life is the happiest, with so much breadth and precision as would justify us in accepting it as a practical first principle. For it is also true, on the other side, that the more we come to exercise any faculty with sustained and prolonged concentration, the more fully we live in such exercise: up to the point at which it becomes wearisome, or turns into a semi-mechanical routine which renders consciousness dull and languid. It is, no doubt, important for our happiness that we should keep within this limit: but we cannot fix it precisely in any particular case without specific experience: especially as there seems always to be a certain amount of weariness and tedium which must be resisted and overcome, if we would bring our faculties into full swing and obtain the full enjoyment of our labour. And similarly in respect of passive, emotional consciousness: if too much sameness of feeling results in languor, too much variety inevitably involves shallowness: and here again the right mean between the two is hard to find, because we are liable to ebbs and pauses of feeling, intervals of unsusceptibility which do not really indicate that we are overstraining our capacity for the emotion in question. The point where concentration ought to stop, and where

dissipation begins, varies from man to man, and cannot be decided by any general formula.

We seem, then, forced to conclude that there is no scientific short cut to the ascertainment of the right means to the individual's greatest happiness: every attempt to find a "high priori road" to this goal brings us back ultimately to simple empiricism. For instead of a clear principle universally valid, we only get at best a vague and general rule, based on considerations which it is important not to overlook, but the relative value of which we can only estimate by careful observation and comparison of individual experiences. Whatever uncertainty besets these processes must necessarily extend to all our reasonings about happiness. I have no wish to exaggerate these uncertainties, feeling that we must all continue to seek happiness for ourselves and for others, in whatever obscurity we may have to grope after it: but there is nothing gained by underrating them, and it is idle to argue as if they did not exist.

BOOK III.

INTUITIONISM.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER I.

INTUITIONISM.

§ 1. In the effort to examine, closely but quite neutrally, the system of Egoistic Hedonism, with which we have been engaged in the last book, one effect that will probably have been produced on the reader's mind is a strong aversion to the principle and method examined. Certainly such an aversion is very commonly announced as the result of contemplating Egoism: and that, though we find it impossible not to admit the "authority" of self-love, or the "rationality" of the impulse to seek one's own individual happiness. Nay, more, it seems difficult to deny the natural *supremacy* of self-love, even over moral sentiments and virtuous impulses, which Butler, as we saw, fully admits[1]. The moralist, therefore, has to treat self-love, not merely as an universal impulse difficult to resist, but as supplying a *primâ facie* tenable principle for the systematization of conduct. And hence it is of great importance to ascertain exactly the results to which this principle logically leads: and especially to know how far it can be reconciled with conscience, or common moral judgments and sentiments, and serve as a foundation of duty. In order to pursue this inquiry in a purely scientific temper, I have thought it well to give no expression to the feeling that the pursuit of one's individual happiness is mean and ignoble. But when we seem to find on careful examination that Egoism cannot fairly be represented as socially constructive, and that the common precepts of duty, which we are trained to regard as sacred, must be to the egoist rules

[1] Cf. *ante*, Book I. c. 1, § 1.

to which it is only generally speaking and for the most part reasonable to conform, but which under special circumstances must be decisively ignored and broken: the sense of the ignobility of Egoism adds force to that recoil from it which this perception of the conflict with duty naturally causes. We cannot believe that these are the results which practical Reason really prescribes: and so we are prepared to embrace some other method for determining right conduct. But further, we are accustomed to expect from Morality something like clearness and precision of precepts or counsels: and such rules as can be laid down for seeking the individual's greatest happiness cannot but appear wanting in these qualities. A dubious guidance to a despicable end seems to be all that the Hedonistic calculus has to offer. And it is by appealing to the superior clearness and certainty, with which the dictates of Conscience or the Moral Faculty are issued, that Butler maintains the practical supremacy of Conscience over Self-love, in spite of his admission (in the passage before quoted) of theoretical priority in the claims of the latter. We can see clearly, he says, what we ought to do: but we cannot see clearly what will lead to our happiness.

This, then, is the fundamental assumption of the method with which the present book will be concerned: that we have the power of seeing clearly to some extent what actions are right and reasonable in themselves, apart from their consequences (except, as has been said, such consequences as are included in the notions of the acts). This power it is convenient to call (as it is commonly called) the faculty of Moral Intuition. Let us proceed to examine the manner and results of its operation.

§ 2. At the outset we are met by a difference of opinion respecting the object to which the moral intuition is primarily directed: on account of which some would take exception to the fundamental assumption as above stated: holding that our moral judgments do not relate immediately to *actions*, but rather to *dispositions* or *motives*. But as regards the former of these notions, we find when we try to make it clear to ourselves that it represents an obscure and not directly cognizable entity. We can only explain to ourselves a "disposition" as "something

permanent in the mind, tending to produce actions (or feelings) of a particular kind:" its rightness therefore can only be inferred from the rightness of the resulting actions (or feelings), and it is this latter that we have primarily to determine. And again, our dispositions do not seem to be directly under the control of the will, though no doubt they may be modified by voluntary effort: it is therefore rather this modifying effort than the disposition itself which we must conceive to be prescribed as a duty.

The case of motives is different: these are known to us directly by introspection: and as the same action may be done from most diverse motives, it makes a clear and important difference whether we regard rightness as belonging to the action or to the motive. Let us first get the question quite clear. By "action" we mean not the actual effects of the agent's volition (for these may be other than he designed, and then they cannot be included in the notion of voluntary action), but the effects as he foresaw them in the act of willing, the intended effects, or briefly the *intention*. By "motive" we mean the conscious impulse to action, whether desire or aversion, which can be introspectively ascertained. It may be said that motives are not directly within the control of the will, any more than dispositions: but though we cannot help having a desire, we can refuse to yield to it: and so if the motive contemplated in any case is the *prevailing* desire or aversion, we may properly judge it to be right or wrong[1]. Otherwise it will no doubt be more exact to speak of motives as better or worse, higher or lower.

Is, then, Motive or Intended Action the proper subject of moral intuition? Both, it would seem, if we follow common sense: but the judgment on actions is, in the view of most men, primary and paramount. Common sense holds that we must not do a bad action from a good motive: to say that the end justifies the means is thought a pernicious paradox. The ordinary rules of morality relate chiefly to actions; though in some cases a particular state of feeling is included in the common notion of the action prescribed, and may even be the most important element. But, generally speaking, it seems more

[1] A certain difficulty arises from the complexity of motives in actual experience, which will be noticed later. Cf. c. 12 of this book.

natural to most men to judge of an action in its external aspect. We cannot cognize the motives of other men directly as we can their actions (which we always begin by presuming intended): nor do we take notice of our own except in the introspective attitude of mind, which is habitual only in a small minority. It is true that the common use of the term "conscience" to denote the moral faculty generally, suggests an opposite view to that just stated. "Conscience" implies properly the passing of moral judgments on ourselves, a process which tends to throw us into the introspective attitude and to bring motives into view[1]. And some have thought that the judgments which we pass on the conduct of others are primarily judgments of conscience, and passed on ourselves hypothetically, by our consciously imagining ourselves in the position of the other persons. But this seems to be a mistake similar to that committed by Hobbes in describing Pity as involving "a fiction of the like calamity befalling ourselves." No doubt, in so far as we sympathize with others, we represent their feelings in imagination as if they were our own: as in reading any description we may be loosely said to imagine ourselves seeing the things described: but we do not really think of ourselves in the one case any more than in the other. And just as in the mental development of the individual and the race, the faculties of external perception are exercised earlier than introspection, so it would seem that moral judgments were originally passed on external actions, and that motives did not come to be considered till later.

§ 3. There is, however, one motive, of such special importance in Ethics, that it may be well to consider it separately: the impulse, namely, to do what is right, simply because it is right. In the Stoic system, and in the teaching of later schools which have much affinity with Stoicism, it has been held that action could not be strictly speaking right, unless done from this motive[2]. On this view, however virtuous action may

[1] Indeed the term Conscience in its original use blends the two notions of 'introspective cognition' and 'ethical judgment.'

[2] In Stoic phraseology an action not done from this motive, however completely it possessed all external characteristics of rightness, was called merely καθῆκον (officium) instead of κατόρθωμα (rectè factum).

branch out into different departments, the virtuous impulse is radically one and the same in all actions. As, however, all schools teach that a person may mistake his duty, and do what is wrong, sincerely believing it to be right, it results that an action may be right in one sense and wrong in another. To express this, the terms "formal" and "material" have been used. An action done from the pure desire to fulfil duty is said to be "formally" right: if it really is a duty, it is also materially right. However, as "material" rightness is what we commonly mean by rightness, and what we desire to have determined for us when we ask what our duty is (a question which generally supposes a desire to do duty, if we only knew what it was); it would seem that this view of the paramount importance of the dutiful impulse does not point to any special principles or method of Ethics: we have still to arrive at these by some other road.

But we must observe further, that even the Formal rightness of an action, as just explained, includes two quite distinct elements, a desire and a belief[1]. The latter must always accompany the desire, but is capable of existing without it. I cannot perform an action from pure love of duty without believing it to be right: but I can believe it to be right and yet do it from some other motive. The former condition is therefore stricter than the latter: and, as was said, it is only by a certain class of moralists that it is regarded as essential to right action. Many would hold that an action may be perfectly right, though done from a less exalted motive than the pure love of duty. In fact, some moralists have taken pains, in direct antagonism to the Stoical schools above mentioned, to distinguish the absolute end, to which (as they hold) every right action must be a means,

[1] The words Form and Formal, as J. S. Mill has remarked, are used in several more or less analogous significations, which it is somewhat difficult to comprehend under one definition. In the present case we may understand them as denoting at once a *universal and essential*, and a *subjective* or *internal* condition of the rightness of actions. In Kants' ethical writings, where these terms are especially prominent, the two conditions distinguished in the text appear to be confounded under the one notion of 'Form of Duty.' This I regard as one of Kant's fundamental errors. The other (and more important) error lies in his attempt to deduce a complete code of duty from a purely formal principle.

from the immediate ends at which persons who would act rightly ought consciously to aim. And if the ultimate end would be less attained if always consciously sought, its pursuit is, we may say, necessarily self-limitative: the principle that we ought to aim at it involves (however paradoxically) the subordinate principle that we ought not to aim at it consciously. We have seen strong grounds for admitting this paradox in the development of Egoistic Hedonism: and it has been emphatically adopted by Austin and other utilitarians of Bentham's school. But more generally, a moralist of any school may maintain against Stoicism, that it is right to do what is (externally) right from other, more particular and less exalted, motives than the mere desire of acting rightly. This question will come before us again when we examine more closely the Intuitional Method in its application to motives[1]. Meanwhile it will be commonly admitted that no act can be absolutely right, whatever its external aspect and relations, which the agent does not believe to be so. Thus upon any theory of Ethics we require to distinguish *real* from *believed*, or, as is now commonly said, "objective" from "subjective" rightness. Indeed this distinction sometimes involves us in a practical perplexity, not as regards our own conduct (for we obviously cannot distinguish what we believe to be right from what really is so), but in arguing with others. For if another is about to do what he thinks right while we believe it to be wrong, and we are able to bring other motives to bear on him that may overbalance his sense of duty, the question arises whether we ought thus to tempt him to realize objective rightness against his convictions. Perhaps when this question is fairly contemplated the moral sense of mankind would pronounce decidedly against such temptation; thus regarding the Subjective rightness of an action as more important than the Objective, when the two are presented as alternatives. But, however this may be, it seems at least clear that no action is perfectly right which is not so in both these aspects.

It should be observed that in the mere fact that this distinction is drawn it is implied that Right and Wrong are really objective: that is, the same, whether recognised or not, for all

[1] *Cf. post*, c. 12.

Minds or Subjects. This was before noticed[1] as a fundamental assumption both of ethical science and of ordinary moral reasoning. And indeed it would be scarcely necessary to draw attention to it, were it not that there are many judgments objective in form, of which yet, when we reflect, we commonly allow the objectivity to be merely apparent. If I say "This smell is sweet," and another "It is not sweet," the two judgments apparently conflict, yet neither of us would seriously accuse the other of error. But in ethical judgments we commonly maintain the objectivity to be real, and therefore that there is a science of Ethics, at least possible, and indeed demanded, as we all wish to avoid error. If then I assert any action to be right, I imply that it would be right for any other person in my circumstances: or (for obviously that the circumstances are *my* circumstances cannot make it right) for all persons in precisely similar circumstances. Observe, I do not imply that it would be right for persons in different circumstances: all moralists teach that the rightness at any rate of *most* actions is altered by a *material* alteration of circumstances, and as I cannot determine without further inquiry what circumstances are material, I can as yet assert nothing about circumstances that are at all different. I can only assert that if the action is *not* right for a person in different circumstances, the difference of circumstances must contain the ground and reason of the difference in the moral character of the action[2].

But, even as thus limited, the condition may supply us with a valuable practical rule. For all reflective persons have observed that our moral judgments are apt to be warped and perverted by strong desire, which continually impels us to pronounce its object objectively desirable (as a lover asserts his mistress to be objectively the most charming of women): so that we too easily think that we *ought* to do what we very much wish to do. If then we ask ourselves whether we think that any other person in precisely the same circumstances ought to

[1] Cf. B. I. c. 1, § 3.

[2] It should be observed that difference of circumstances must be taken to include difference of nature and character—in short all differences beyond the mere individuality of different individuals.

do the action, the question will often disperse the false appearance of objective rightness which our intense individual impulse has given to the action. We see that we should not like other persons to do it, and therefore that it cannot be right for us. Indeed this subjective test of the rightness of our volitions is so generally effective, that Kant seems to have regarded it as supplying a complete criterion of Duty. But this is an error analogous to that of supposing that Formal Logic supplies a complete criterion of truth. A volition which stands this test may after all be wrong, though a volition which does not stand it cannot be right. It is no doubt a most important precept that one should always "act on a maxim that one can will to be law universal." But every conscientious person, as such, implicitly conforms to this precept: and since conscientious persons are continually disagreeing as to what ought to be done, we cannot say that every such person acts rightly without contradicting the very assumption upon which the precept is founded: viz. that what is (objectively) right for any one, is right for all persons under similar circumstances.

It is clear then that no subjective criterion of duty, however important it may be, can help us to construct a system of objective rules of conduct. But this, as was said, is the primary object of the present inquiry: since a certain desire to do whatever we may conclude to be our duty is to be presumed from the mere fact of our undertaking an ethical investigation at all.

§ 4. It seems then that for the construction of our moral system we shall have to rely upon direct intuitions of the qualities of acts, considered for the most part in their external relations.

But here arises the question, Have we any such intuitions? For we ought not perhaps to take for granted the actuality of the Intuitional method, as we did that of Hedonism in the preceding book. There is no doubt that men sometimes seek pleasure, and comparing different pleasures choose that which seems to be the greatest: but it has been doubted whether we ever by contemplating actions discern them to be right, and regard this perception as a paramount reason for doing them. Or, perhaps, no one would explicitly deny the proposition as

just stated: but it is maintained that this "perception of rightness" is really a perception of conduciveness to pleasure. Here, if the agent's own pleasure be meant, the assertion is in manifest conflict with experience: for most of us never have what we call the perception of rightness more strongly than in cases where it is divorced from any expectation of consequent pleasure to ourselves. It is no doubt true, as a general rule, that what is perceived to be right is conducive to some happiness or other, though possibly not to the agent's. Nevertheless, introspection and observation of the mental processes of others, as far as we can infer them from external signs, seem to shew that the perception of rightness is, as a mental phenomenon, quite distinct from the prevision of consequent pleasure to somebody, however much the two may coincide: and this is confirmed by the numerous cases in which the coincidence is hard to demonstrate[1].

And probably the statement, that at any rate the majority of men, in the present stage of human development, have an intuitive and immediate apprehension of the rightness and wrongness of actions, would never have been denied as a psychological proposition; if it had not usually been presented in combination with two other much more disputable propositions, which again require to be distinguished from one another, though they are intimately connected. The *existence* of moral intuitions has been confounded with their *validity*: and the inquiry into their nature as present facts has been mixed up with an inquiry into their *origin*.

All three, Existence, Validity, and Origin, should be discussed quite independently. The mere fact that we continually pass moral judgments does not prove that we ought to accept them as unquestionably valid. It is no doubt an essential characteristic of such judgments that they present themselves as commands and claim paramount authority: but as we are continually convinced of error in respect of other mental processes, so these also may be erroneous: we may find it necessary to revise and correct the spontaneous utterances of conscience, or at any rate to yield them only a qualified obedience. Nor, again, can I

[1] An interesting exposition of some of these cases is to be found in Lecky's *History of Morals*, Introduction, pp. 41—54.

admit that the question of existence can be in any way affected by inquiries into origin. This view, however, has received such wide acceptance, that the term "intuitive" has actually been confounded in use with "innate," even by respectable thinkers. It seems to be frequently assumed, that if it can be shewn how certain mental phenomena, thoughts or feelings, have grown up, if we can point to the antecedent phenomena, of which they are the natural consequents—then suddenly the phenomena which we began by investigating, have vanished: they are no longer there, but something else which we have mistaken for them: the "elements" of which they are said to be "composed." The illegitimacy of this inference will, I think, be allowed as soon as it is clearly contemplated. It has been encouraged partly by an infelicitous transference of the language and conceptions of Chemistry to Psychology. In chemistry we regard the antecedents (elements) as still existing in and constituting the consequent (compound) because the latter corresponds to the former in some of its properties (weight, &c.) and because we can generally cause the compound to disappear and obtain the elements in its place. But there is nothing similar to this in the formation of new mental phenomena by what Mill calls "mental chemistry," and therefore this term seems inappropriate. The new mental fact is in no respect correspondent to its antecedents nor can it be resolved into them: nor does the fact that these antecedents have pre-existed render the consequent illusory and unreal.

This confusion of Existence and Origin is, however, partly due to the supposed connexion of Origin and Validity. The proof that our moral apprehensions are not innate has been taken as evidence that they are something different from what they seem, because it has been held to invalidate that claim to be obeyed which is their essential characteristic.

And no doubt this claim has been rested on their supposed innateness: the connexion of Origin and Validity has been assumed in the teaching of the Intuitional schools, as well as in the attacks of their antagonists. But it is so far from being self-evident that it may easily be represented as paradoxical. Why should our earliest beliefs and perceptions be more trustworthy than our latest, supposing the two to differ? The

truths of the higher mathematics are among our most secure intellectual possessions, yet the power of apprehending these is rarely developed until the mind has reached maturity. Or to take an example of a most opposite kind: our apprehensions of beauty vary so much from individual to individual (and still more from age to age and country to country), that it is a matter of common dispute whether there be any objective beauty, or standard apprehension of the beautiful: but no one ever thought of appealing from the adult's taste to the infant's, and seeking the standard in the cradle. It is hard to see why a different view should be taken in the case of moral intuitions: especially when so many Christian theologians have emphatically proclaimed that the impulses with which we are born are in an altogether unsatisfactory state: and that we cannot even desire to do rightly until "nature" has been modified by "grace."

It seems, in fine, that not only are the questions as to the (1) Existence, (2) Origin, (3) Validity of Moral Intuitions distinct, but the answers are to be sought by different methods. The first is a question of present psychological fact, and is to be settled by introspection or immediate observation of our own minds, and observation of the minds of others through the medium of language and other signs. The second is a question of historical psychology with which we are not here concerned; and its answer can only be made approximately certain, by reasoning, to a great extent hypothetically, from the present to the past. The third is not a psychological question at all, but belongs to the Logic or Metaphysic of Ethics: and it seems more convenient to defer the discussion of it until we have carefully examined the ethical beliefs that lay claim to intuitive certainty[1]. Meanwhile we may perhaps take for granted the psychological fact that we actually do judge intuitively of the rightness and wrongness of actions, whatever may be the historical explanation of such judgments and however much or little we ought to trust them.

There is, however, a possible view of these moral rules which admits their validity, and yet after all brings us back to Hedonism by another road. It may be maintained that by a

[1] Cf. *post*, c. 11.

moral rule, when we reflect on our notion of it, we find we really mean a law of God, and that we are really moved to obey the rule from fear or hope of what God may do to us in the future. And no doubt in a Christian society, where there is a well-established belief that God will reward virtue and punish vice, it is difficult to prove that right actions are not done from hope of reward or fear of punishment. Still, there seems good ground for concluding that this is not always or perhaps even generally the case. For we find these moral beliefs strong and clear in persons in whom religious convictions are dim and feeble, or even non-existent: and again, even the most religious persons commonly hold that right actions ought to be done because they are right[1], and not from desire of reward: and introspection seems to shew that they are frequently so done, and that the more clearly because there is a peculiar pleasurable emotion, sometimes called "the natural reward of virtue," which attends such acts when done from pure regard for duty, but not otherwise.

But however this question may be decided, it does not really affect our present position. For the true rules of voluntary action may be just as much known by intuition, even if our motive for obeying them be purely egoistic: and, we may add, even if this be thought our only reasonable ground for obeying them. This in fact was precisely Locke's view. He held, on the one hand, that "good and evil are nothing but pleasure and pain, or that which occasions or procures pleasure or pain to us[2]:" so that "it would be utterly in vain to suppose a rule set to the free actions of man, without annexing to it some reward or punishment to determine his will:" while on the other hand he "doubted not, but from self-evident propositions, by necessary consequences, as incontestable as those in mathematics, the measures of right and wrong might be made out[3]," so that "morality might be placed among the sciences capable of demonstration." In this way we get one of those composite

[1] It may be said that they ought rather to be done from the love of God. But this would only throw the distinctively moral motive one step back: as the best theologians hold that God ought to be loved as a moral being, and not because he is able to punish and reward us.

[2] Locke's *Essay*, II. c. 28, §§ 5, 6. [3] *Ib.* IV. c. 3, § 18.

systems noticed before[1]: in which the Intuitional method is united to the first principle of Egoistic Hedonism, by means of the theological conclusion, intuition, or postulate, "that God rewards virtue." Some such system seems to be widely accepted, though its heterogeneous elements have not often been presented with as much clearness and sharpness of definition as in Locke's essay: but we need not dwell further on its distinctive peculiarities, since its method coincides with that of Intuitionism proper, and it is with method chiefly that our present inquiry is concerned.

§ 5. The first question that arises when we try to get a clear idea of this method, is one that we have already[2] discussed: viz. whether the intuitive judgments which form the premises of moral reasoning are universal or individual. In a sense, as we saw, all moral judgments are universal in their import: that is, they affirm implicitly that something ought to be done not only by the individual whose action is judged, but by any one in similar circumstances. But admitting this potential universality, we may still ask whether the intuition on which we ultimately rely is a judgment that "such a class of actions is right (or wrong)," or that "this particular action ought or ought not to be done." In the latter case all our general propositions in Ethics must rest on induction from such particular judgments, and our scientific method will be strictly inductive: and at the same time strictly superfluous, as far as practice is concerned. For it is plain that if we rely thoroughly on the correctness and validity of each particular judgment, the comparison and classification of such judgments can have for us only a speculative interest.

This is not, however, the view of the Moral Faculty which has been usually taken by Moralists of the Intuitive School: nor does it seem to be, on the whole, maintained by the common opinion of reflective persons, although it is perhaps the one suggested by most of the popular talk about conscience. Reflective conscientious persons are not in the habit of trusting an unreasoned judgment respecting each case that comes before them: they are rather inclined to bring it under some general rule, which they believe to be supported upon the common con-

[1] B. I. c. 6, § 3. [2] B. I. c. 8, § 2.

sent of mankind, as well as intuitively discerned by their own moral faculty. In this way they hope to decide the differences that notoriously arise among men in judging of particular actions: just as we decide disputed legal claims by a reference to the law that both disputants equally recognise[1].

And no doubt we find such universal moral intuitions in most or all minds: in fact, they seem to be involved in our judgments on particular cases. The moral faculty is wont to pronounce directly on the rightness or wrongness of classes of actions, represented by general notions: and we find current among mankind general moral maxims, as to the validity of which there is at least apparent agreement in the same age and country. A complete collection of such maxims, regarded as a set of rules imposed on an individual by the public opinion of the community to which he belongs, we have called the Positive Morality of the community: but when regarded as a body of moral truth, warranted to be such by the *consensus* of mankind, or of well-educated and morally enlightened persons, it is more significantly termed the Morality of Common Sense.

When, however, we come to reflect on these currently accepted principles, we find that the notions composing them are generally deficient in clearness. Indeed, the mere fact that mankind appear so much more agreed as to the general rules of morality than as to the rightness or wrongness of particular actions, is in itself suggestive of a want of definiteness in these general rules. In the parallel case of Law, to which reference was just now made, the reason why conscientious and candid persons differ as to the legality of an action is, generally, that the law is complicated and obscure, and requires erudition and intellectual effort in order to be completely known: but this is obviously not the case with moral rules as commonly conceived. If, therefore, their application is difficult and leads to controversies, it can only be on account of their indefiniteness. Sometimes, indeed, in forensic disputes the law of which the application is sought is really indefinite: in which case the judge who decides the dispute has to modify the law by defining it further,

[1] For, as was before explained, we cannot adopt the view that when two persons differ both may be right: that is, *objectively* right, as of course each person is subjectively right when he acts in accordance with his conviction.

and thus we get what is called judge-made law. And if legal formulæ, with all their tedious fulness and laboured precision of phraseology, are found not sufficiently definite in their application to the complex circumstances of human life, it would be perhaps strange if the simple moral maxims formulated by the common opinion of mankind were found to be at once capable of universally clear application.

We may illustrate this by taking a few examples from the Morality of Common Sense, in the state in which it first presents itself to the reflective intellect: by taking, that is, some of the chief Virtues commonly recognised, and considering how far they admit of immediate unhesitating application to particular cases of conduct. For instance, we might select the ancient cardinal virtues of Justice and Temperance, and add the more modern virtues of Universal Benevolence and Veracity. It is certain that all men would accept the general maxims that we ought to be benevolent, just, truthful, temperate: but when we ask (1) whether we may rightly indulge in luxuries when our fellow-men are in want, (2) whether primogeniture is just, or the disendowment of corporations, or the determination of the value of services by competition, (3) whether and how far false statements may be allowed in speeches of advocates, or in religious ceremonials, or to enemies or robbers, or in defence of lawful secrets, (4) whether we may eat and drink more than health requires for the sake of convivial enjoyment—on these questions we do not find that even conscientious persons can give clear and unhesitating decisions. And yet such questions as these are, after all, those to which we naturally expect answers from the moralist. For we study Ethics, as Aristotle says, for the sake of Practice: and in practice we are concerned with particulars.

Hence it seems that if the rules of Intuitive Morality are really to have the clearness and certainty which is commonly claimed for them: if they are to be compared, as Intuitive Moralists have often compared them, to the axioms of Geometry, as having equal self-evidence, and available in equally cogent demonstrations: they must first be raised, by an effort of reflection which ordinary persons will not make, to a higher degree

of exactness and precision than attaches to them in the common thought and discourse of mankind in general. We have, in fact, to take up the attempt that Socrates initiated, and endeavour to define satisfactorily the general notions of Virtue which we all in common use for awarding approbation or disapprobation to conduct. This is the task upon which we shall be engaged in the nine chapters that follow. I must beg the reader to bear in mind that throughout these chapters I am not trying to prove or disprove Intuitionism, but merely to throw it into a scientific form: I am trying, that is, by mere reflection on the Common Sense which I and my reader share, and to which appeal is so often made in moral disputes, to obtain as explicit, exact, and coherent a statement as possible of its fundamental principles.

CHAPTER II.

VIRTUE AND DUTY.

§ 1. BEFORE, however, we attempt to define the principles of the different virtues, it may be well to examine further the notion of Virtue in general, in order to make clear its relations to the notions of "right" and "duty" which we have so far chiefly employed. And first, the word seems to be used in two different connexions, as it sometimes denotes a quality of conduct, and sometimes a quality or element of character. The latter usage seems on the whole the most common: but, in fact, as the two are strictly correspondent, it will make no difference which we take: provided only we bear in mind that virtues, like other elements of the permanent self or character, are not cognizable directly, but only inferred from the transitory phenomena, actions or feelings, which are regarded as their effects. Shall we then define Virtue as the disposition to do Right actions or Duties? But perhaps these two latter notions, on closer examination, will be found not to coincide altogether. There is certainly some right conduct, and that very necessary and important, to which we do not generally apply even the notion of duty. For example, it is right that we should eat and drink enough: but we do not commonly speak of this as a duty. It would appear that those actions to which we are sufficiently impelled by natural desire are not called duties, because no moral impulse is needed for doing them. We may illustrate this by considering other actions which seem to be included in, or excluded from, the sphere of duty, according as our natural impulse is or is not thought to be strong enough to

impel us to perform them to the desirable extent: as marrying and producing children. In the last century, when our country was thought to require more population, it was often seriously said to be a man's duty to society to take a wife: but now that the opposite view prevails, and the 'surplus population' presents itself as a difficulty to be met, no one would call this action a duty, except in jest or as a relic of an old manner of speech. Similarly we say of the exceptional persons who, being well off, eat and drink too little, that it is their *duty* to live more generously: and of those too intent on work that it is their duty to take a holiday. So again there are wanton injuries and gross breaches of decorum from which we do not commonly say that it is a man's duty to abstain, because we expect that he will abstain naturally. It will therefore be best to define Duties as 'those Right actions or abstinences, for the adequate accomplishment of which a moral impulse is at least occasionally necessary.' Inquiring now whether Duty and Virtue coincide, we see in the first place that there is some indefiniteness in the common conception of each. Some would no doubt define Virtue as a disposition to do duties; but in its common use each term seems to include something excluded from the other. Virtue is a species of excellence: and we do not regard behaviour as excellent when it is such as the majority of mankind would exhibit, and such as a man would be severely blamed for not exhibiting. Between the actions for which a person is praised and those for which he is blamed there seems to be an intermediate region, where the notion of duty applies, but not that of virtue. We should scarcely say it was virtuous to pay one's debts, or give one's children a decent education, or keep one's aged parents from starving: because these are duties which most men perform, and only bad men neglect. Again, there are excellent actions which we do not regard as *incumbent* on men, and so do not commonly call duties, though we praise men for doing them: as for a rich man to live very plainly and devote his income to works of public beneficence. At the same time it would, I think, carry us too far from common sense to use the two terms as mutually exclusive. For we call men virtuous for doing what is strictly their duty. It seems, therefore, best to employ the notions in such a way that the

realization of virtue in conduct may include the performance of duty as well as what goes beyond it.

§ 2. Virtue, then, would seem to be a disposition to do, or habit of doing, such voluntary actions as are deserving of praise or approbation.

But here there may seem to be almost a contradiction in our terms: for if we do the action merely from habit, or as the result of disposition, it would seem that we cannot help doing it, and therefore that the action is not strictly voluntary, as no interposition of Free Will is required. To avoid this difficulty Kant distinguishes a habit or settled bent of will from a habit of action; and calls the latter mechanical, but considers the former consistent with Freedom of Will. It seems, however, to be implied in the notion of Freedom, that the free act proceeds from the unconditioned Self or Ego, as distinguished from the definite formed character of which a habit is an element. In so far as we conceive an action to be a result and expression of our character, it appears to be connected by rigid links of causation with our past, and we cannot apply to it the idea of present freedom. And no doubt the definition naturally suggests the antinony or unsolved contradiction which we find in all our conceptions of human action, and for which no solution is offered in the present treatise[1]. An action to be virtuous must be voluntary: if it is not, there seems to be no merit in it: and yet virtue is an element of character, and in so far as a man's character takes effect in his actions, we can predict those actions beforehand, and they appear to be necessary. Still, we may avoid this difficulty, as was before proposed, by defining all conscious performance or non-performance of acts to be voluntary if the operation of a sufficiently strong motive would have prevented it. It will, perhaps, be said that there are some virtues which are not even in this sense voluntary: and that it is another distinction between Virtue and Duty, that we can always do our duty, but cannot always attain by the utmost effort this or that special virtue. I think, however, that it will on reflection be admitted that an excellence of behaviour which no effort of will can enable us to exhibit at any particular moment is not most properly called a

[1] *Cf.* Bk. I. c. 5.

virtue, but only in a looser application of the term. Indeed, we may perhaps say that no quality of conduct is ever called a virtue unless it is thought to be, at least to some extent, universally attainable by immediate volition. For though we cannot be thoroughly wise or cautious or courageous or amiable when we wish, we can perhaps attain these qualities to a certain extent, or at least avoid the opposite faults. Nay, some thinkers[1] have not only restricted Virtue to excellences of behaviour which can be attained always by a sufficient effort of will, but have even regarded the action as virtuous in proportion to this effort: holding that in so far as we do the act from natural impulse, liking to do it, it is not properly virtuous. On the other hand, some (as Aristotle) regard Virtue as imperfect so long as the agent does not take pleasure in the virtuous action. And surely the former opinion is paradoxical: for all duties become easier to do by continually doing them, and we seem thus to be making progress towards perfection: it is from a wrong bent of natural impulse that we find it hard to do duty, and it seems strange to say that the more we cure ourselves of this wrong bent, the less virtuous we grow. Perhaps we may distinguish between the general desire to fulfil duty and attain moral excellence, which we may call the root of Virtue, and the special virtues, which we may call the branches: and in proportion as a man comes to like any particular kind of virtuous action, and to do it naturally, we shall not say that he shews less of the special virtue, but that in this department of his life he has less room to exhibit that central energy and striving of the will after right and excellent action, which is the source of progress in all special virtues.

It may be observed, that the notion of Virtue as just explained seems to result from a combination of two different modes of thought. In the ordinary form of the moral judgment, in which an action is affirmed to be "right," or a "duty," reflection shews it to be distinctly implied that the act is within the power of the Will. What we "ought" to do we "can" do. But in that other phase or species of Intuitionism, discussed in chap. 9 of Book I., which might be distinguished as Æsthetic Intuitionism, what we judge intuitively is the goodness or

[1] Cf. Stewart, *Active and Moral Powers*, B. II. c. 5.

excellence of character and conduct, of which Virtue proper is an important part: and from this point of view we do not originally raise the question how far the conduct thus commended is strictly voluntary. By degrees, however, Virtue comes to be distinguished by this characteristic of voluntariness from those other gifts and graces which we cannot exhibit at will.

At the same time, these other excellences are not altogether discharged from the idea of duty as commonly conceived. They seem all to be included in the current notion of the 'duty of aiming at excellence or perfection,' under which the principle of Æsthetic Intuitionism is commonly recognised as a subordinate part of the morality of common sense (just as the principles of the two kinds of Hedonism are recognised under the notions of Prudence and Benevolence respectively). These other excellences, though they cannot be attained at will, can always be cultivated: and therefore we may say that they 'ought' to be cultivated. And similarly, it would seem that all virtues proper ought to be cultivated, as elements of the perfection at which we ought to aim: so that even such virtuous conduct as seems to go beyond duty in any special department is in this more indefinite manner brought under the notion of duty in general. Still, in so far as Virtue in the strictest sense is voluntary, it may appear unnecessary to cultivate it in any other way than by doing virtuous actions when occasion arises. And, pursuing this line of thought, we may be led to conclude that all virtues are really summed up and included, as Socrates and the Stoics maintained, in knowledge of what is right and best to be done, together with a wish to do it[1]. And certainly, in so far as perfectly deliberate action is concerned, this latter would seem to be all that we require. But, in order to fulfil our duties thoroughly, we are obliged to act during part of our lives suddenly and without deliberation, and (as we say) "instinctively:" on such occasions there is no room for moral reasoning, and sometimes not even for explicit moral judgment; so that in order to act rightly, and still more to act virtuously, we require such particular habits and dispositions as are denoted by the

[1] This wish Socrates always assumed: since every rational being must, he thought, desire his own good.

names of the special virtues: and it is a duty to foster and develope these in whatever way experience shews this to be possible.

§ 3. We have observed that in this (as we may call it) *semi-voluntary* part of our conduct there is no room for the application of general maxims and deductive moral reasoning: so that if our moral faculty acts at all, it must be by direct intuition of the rightness or wrongness, goodness or badness, of the particular action.

This leads me to a remark which to some extent qualifies what was said in the preceding chapter. I there assumed that duty or right action was something which could be perfectly defined, and complained of the common notions of the special virtues—justice, &c., as too vague to furnish exact determinations of the actions enjoined under them. And this assumption naturally belongs to the ordinary or jural view of Ethics: a law indefinitely drawn is always held to be a bad law: if obligations are imposed upon any one he ought at least to know what they are. But the opposite is suggested by Æsthetic Intuitionism, even as regards the more deliberate part of our conduct no less than the more instinctive: for from this point of view we naturally compare excellence of conduct with beauty or excellence in the products of the Fine Arts. Of these latter we commonly say, that though rules and definite prescriptions may do much, they can never do all: that the highest excellence is always due to an instinct or tact that cannot be reduced to definite formulæ. We can describe the beautiful products when they are produced, and to some extent classify their beauties, giving names to each; but cannot prescribe any certain method for producing each kind of beauty. So, it may be said, stands the case with virtues: and hence the attempt to state an explicit maxim, by applying which we may be sure of producing virtuous acts of any kind, must fail: we can only give a general account of the virtue—a description not a definition—and leave it to trained insight to find in any particular circumstances the act that will best realize it. On the other hand, the school whom we may call the Rational or Jural Intuitionists maintain that Ethics is—or ought to be—as much a science as Geometry: having therefore for its first principles the maxims of

which we have spoken or the most fundamental of them. The question, Which of these two views is the true one? is the most important presented in this part of our inquiry into ethical method; for it is only on the latter view that we can give Ethics a scientific treatment, instead of the looser manner of exposition in which we throw together the results of criticism in any branch of the Fine Arts. We cannot, I think, decide the question without examining in detail the propositions which have been put forward as ethical axioms, and seeing how far they prove to be clear and explicit, or how far others may be suggested preserving these qualities. For it would not be maintained, at least by the more judicious thinkers of this school, that such axioms are to be found with proper exactness of form by mere observation of the common moral reasonings of men: but rather that they are latent in these reasonings and may be evolved from them, and that when evolved their truth is self-evident, and must be accepted at once by an intelligent and unbiassed mind. Just as some mathematical axioms are not known to the multitude, and cannot be known, as their certainty cannot be seen except by minds carefully prepared,—but yet, when their terms are properly understood, the perception of their absolute truth is immediate and irresistible. Similarly, if we are not able to claim for our moral axiom, in its precise form, an explicit and actual assent of "*orbis terrarum*," we may still obtain one implicit and potential: though the formula educed be new, it may still be what men before vaguely intended, and what they will now unhesitatingly admit.

In this inquiry it is not of great importance in what order we take the virtues, nor even that our list should be perfectly complete and symmetrical. We are not to examine the system of any particular moralist, but the Morality as it was called of Common Sense; and we may take the matter of investigation quite empirically, as we find it in the common thought expressed in the common language of mankind. The systems of moralists commonly attempt to give some definite arrangement to this crude material: but in so far as they are systematic they generally seem forced to transcend Common Sense, and define what it has left doubtful. For example, the most natural and obvious division of Virtues and Duties is

into Self-regarding and Social: and we have already found it convenient to assume this provisionally. But when we come to details, we soon find important virtues which it is not easy to place confidently in either of these classes: as (e.g.) Courage and Chastity.

On the whole it seems best for our present purposes to take the virtues rather in the order of their importance; and, as there are some that seem to have a special comprehensiveness of range, and to include under them, in a manner, all or most of the others, it will be convenient to begin with these. Of these Wisdom is perhaps the most obvious: in the next chapter, therefore, I propose to examine what we mean by Wisdom, and to consider at the same time some of the other terms which we use to denote intellectual virtues or excellences.

There is, however, one point that we ought to notice before we enter upon the examination of the particular virtues, though it cannot yet be completely discussed.

In order to have a complete theory of Ethics we require not only to make our maxims perfectly precise, but also to systematize them completely, in order that no collision of precepts may remain possible. The principles of this systematization are not easy to elicit from Common Sense: which, in fact, is somewhat reluctant to admit that such collision can take place. We may observe, however, one general principle on which all are agreed: that virtuous performance, in so far as it extends beyond the range of duty and is excellent and praiseworthy rather than obligatory, must always be postponed to the fulfilment of Duty proper. It is sometimes said that indeterminate duty must yield to determinate: and this distinction generally coincides with the one just mentioned. But we shall find instances of duties of which the obligation seems perfectly strict, which yet cannot be made determinate as far as performance is concerned.

CHAPTER III.

THE INTELLECTUAL VIRTUES.

§ 1. *Φρόνησις* (Practical Wisdom) was placed by the Greeks first in the list of cardinal virtues: but its precise relation to the other virtues was a continual source of perplexity, so that even the thought of Aristotle loses its usual analytical clearness on this subject.

The truth is that not only does the common meaning of the term Wisdom require to be made more definite and precise, as is the case with all the ethical terms of ordinary thought; but when we try to make it precise we have to choose between conflicting alternatives, so blended in the purview of Common Sense that the conflict is not usually perceived. We must first exclude a meaning in which the word is sometimes used, to denote purely speculative faculties, or rather their excellence. The superior grasp of knowledge of any kind, or the habit or faculty of acquiring it more rapidly or thoroughly than others, scarcely comes under the notion of Virtue, as it cannot be attained at all by immediate volition at any moment. Nor do we ordinarily call a man wise because he is eminent in speculative science: we may apply the term to him loosely, perhaps assuming that he will shew Practical Wisdom also above the average: but if we find him deficient in this, we say that he is learned or clever but not wise. Wisdom must at any rate be something that leads to sound practical conclusions: but it may still be asked whether the term only denotes skill in discerning the right means to any given end of action, or also implies excellence in the selection of ends. If it means only the former, this again seems at first sight to be no more directly

under the control of the Will than any species of technical skill, or faculty of selecting the best means to given ends in a certain limited and special department of human action. Such skill in the special arts is partly communicable by means of definite rules: and partly a matter of tact or instinct, depending somewhat on natural gifts and predispositions, but to a great extent acquired by habit and intuition. So Practical Wisdom, or Skill in the Art of Life, as we might call it on this view, would involve a certain amount of scientific knowledge, the portions of different sciences bearing directly on human action, together with empirical rules relating to the same subject-matter; and also the tact or trained instinct just mentioned, which would even be more prominent here, on account of the extreme complexity of the subject-matter. And it would seem that by Practical Wisdom men do often intend such a general faculty of attaining by the best means any ends that we may be led by the natural play of human motives to seek in the course of our lives. However, the more ordinary use of the term Wisdom appears to include something else: as we should not call the most accomplished swindler wise. It includes therefore some choice of ends. Here the conflict of ideas above mentioned comes into view. For, as was noticed in the outset of this work, there are divers ultimate ends of action, which all claim to be rational ends, such as all men ought to adopt. Hence, if Wisdom implies right choice of ends, it is clear that a person who regards some one end as the true or rational ultimate end will not consider a man wise who adopts any other ultimate end. Shall we say then that in the common use of the word Wisdom any one ultimate end is distinctly implied? It may be thought, perhaps, that in the moral view of Common Sense which we are now trying to make clear, since Wisdom itself is prescribed or commended as a quality of conduct intuitively discerned to be right or excellent, the ultimate end which the wise man prefers must be just this attainment of rightness or excellence in conduct generally: or at least that this must be primarily sought, and the pursuit of pleasure for himself or others kept strictly subordinate. I think, however, that in the case of this notion it is impossible to carry out that analysis of ordinary practical reasoning into

several distinct methods, each admitting and needing separate development, upon which the plan of this treatise is founded. For, as we saw, it is characteristic of Common Sense to assume coincidence or harmony among these different competing methods. And hence, while as regards most particular virtues and duties the exercise of the moral faculty in ordinary men is *primâ facie* independent of hedonistic calculations, and occasionally in apparent conflict with their results, so that the reconciliation of the different procedures presents itself as a problem to be solved: in the comprehensive notion of Wisdom the antagonism is latent. Common Sense seems to mean by Wise a man who attains at once all the different rational ends: who by conduct in perfect conformity with the true moral code attains the greatest happiness possible both for himself and for mankind (or that portion of mankind to which his efforts are necessarily restricted). But if we find this synthesis unattainable; if, for example, Rational Egoism seems to lead to conduct opposed to the true interests of mankind in general, and we ask whether we are to call the man Wise who seeks, or him who sacrifices, his individual interests, Common Sense gives no clear reply.

§ 2. We are unable, then, to determine by reflecting on Common Sense the principles of conduct which Wisdom will lay down. But leaving this question on one side, we may perhaps ask whether actions, in so far as wise, are strictly voluntary, and Wisdom, according to our definitions, a Virtue: or rather how far this is the case, as it is clear that it is not entirely so. And first as regards the choice of Ends, the perception of the right end may seem not to be voluntary any more than the perceptions of external sense, or truth of any kind. Or shall we say that even in these cases perception is to some extent voluntary, as it is in our power to look or not look at the object perceived, and to attend or not to the appropriate meanings? And similarly in the case of Moral truth: there are, perhaps, certain conditions of right apprehension which are at least to some extent in our power. Still, there seems to be no more agreement as to what these are than there is as to the ends themselves: as some would say Prayer to God, or some state of elevated emotion, while others would urge that

emotional excitement is likely to perturb the judgment, and would say that we need for right apprehension rather tranquillity of feeling: and some would contend that a complete suppression of selfish impulses was the essential condition, while Egoists would regard this as chimerical and impossible, or, if possible, a plain misdirection of efforts. On these points we cannot decide in the name of Common Sense: but meanwhile most would agree that there are certain violent passions and sensual appetites which are liable to pervert moral apprehensions; and that these are to some extent under the control of the Will, and that a man who uses his utmost efforts to control them, when he wishes to decide on ends of action, may be said to be so far voluntarily wise.

If, now, we suppose the end to be determined, that other function of Wisdom comes into play, which consists in the selection of the best means to the attainment of given ends. Here again, at first sight, this kind of excellence appears purely intellectual, and not properly to be called a Virtue: but experience seems to shew that our insight in practical matters is liable to be perverted by desire and fear, and that this perversion may be prevented by an effort of self-control: so that unwisdom is at least not altogether involuntary. And we may notice that volition has a more important part to play in developing or protecting our insight into the right conduct of life, than it has in respect of the technical skill to which we compared Practical Wisdom: in proportion as the reasonings in which the latter is exhibited are less clear and exact, and the results inevitably more uncertain. For desire and fear could hardly make one go wrong in an arithmetical calculation: but in estimating a balance of complicated probabilities it is more difficult to resist the influence of strong feeling.

So much for the influence of the Will on the decisions of the Reason. But when we have decided what course of conduct is under any given circumstances rational, the question arises whether we can deliberately and with perfect self-consciousness refuse to adopt it. This question has been answered in the negative by many thinkers. It cannot of course be doubted that men often do what they know to be irrational: but it has been thought that they do so impulsively, under the influence

of passion, which temporarily obliterates the consciousness that the action is irrational. And no doubt this is a phenomenon of frequent occurrence. Experience, however, would seem to shew that "video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor" is often true of conduct planned with perfect deliberation. But we certainly should not call a man Wise who was guilty of such deliberate unreason. The notion of Wisdom therefore implies a right condition of Will, not only indirectly, as necessary to the attainment of sound practical conclusions; but also directly, in order to carry these conclusions into effect. We must include under it the duty of adopting, after deliberation, the decisions of the Practical Reason: a duty perfectly clear and express. We should distinguish from this the more difficult excellence of adhering to rational resolves in spite of all gusts of impulse that the varying occasions of life may arouse. It is clearly our duty so to adhere, in so far as it is within the power of the Will: as a rational resolve should not be modified except deliberately: and this virtue, by some such name as Firmness, is commonly recognised as an indispensable auxiliary to Wisdom. But it hardly seems altogether voluntary: that is, attainable at will when it is wanted: for the time at which Firmness is most needed is just when we are not sufficiently self-conscious to resist the influence of external circumstances on our previously formed character. We can, however, cultivate this excellence more directly and certainly than others, by graving our resolves deeper in the moments of deliberation that continually intervene among the moments of impulsive action.

§ 3. In examining the functions of Wisdom, other subordinate excellences come into view, which it will be well briefly to consider. Some of these no one would call exactly virtues: such as Sagacity in selecting the really important points amid a crowd of others, Acuteness in seeing aids or obstacles that lie somewhat hidden, Ingenuity in devising subtle or complicated means to our ends, and other cognate qualities vaguely defined and named. We cannot be acute, or ingenious, or sagacious when we please, though we may become more so by practice. The case is somewhat different with Caution. In so far indeed as Caution implies the taking into account *material* circumstances, it is as purely intellectual as the qualities

just mentioned: for by no effort of will can we certainly see what we ought to see, but only look steadily and comprehensively. But Caution is perhaps more properly applied to the habit of deliberating, wherever deliberation is required, even though natural impulses urge us to immediate action: a quality approximately voluntary, like Firmness, to which it is very analogous: only whereas the maxim of Firmness could be made perfectly explicit (for Firmness was seen to lie in adhesion to resolutions formed after full deliberation, and refusal to change them without fresh deliberation), it is not so with Caution. We can only say that a man should deliberate sufficiently, or when it is required, but we cannot say how much, or lay down universal rules for its occasions. We have come therefore to a virtue the attainment of which must be left to empirical tact: the utmost scientific precision cannot aid practice. An indication of this we find in the fact that Caution is used dyslogistically: at least a man is said to be too cautious, or over-cautious, when he deliberates too much or too often. Now he is never said to be over-firm. It is true that a man is called obstinate, which might seem to mean over-firm: but we can explicitly distinguish obstinacy as the habit of adhering to resolves not formed after due deliberation, or when fresh deliberation is required.

Caution is also used in a different sense. Since of the various means which we may use to gain any end, some are more and some less certain; and some are dangerous, that is, involve a chance of consequences either antagonistic to our pursuit, or on other grounds to be avoided, while others are free from such danger: Caution is often used to denote the temper of mind which inclines to the more certain and less dangerous means. In this sense, in so far as the chance in each case of winning the end, and the value of the end as compared with other ends, and as weighed against the detriment which its pursuit may entail, can be precisely estimated, the duty of Caution may be determined with scientific exactness.

Another excellence which we may notice as having a similar partial voluntariness is Decision, which in a manner balances Caution, in so far as it is a habit of not deliberating too long, or unnecessarily. So far its maxim must also be left unexplicit. But it may also mean a habit of resisting an

irrational impulse to which men are liable, of continuing to some extent in the deliberative attitude when they know that deliberation is no longer expedient, and that they ought to be acting. In this sense the duty is quite clear and definite, and the quality may be classed with Firmness: indeed it may be considered a special application of Firmness.

CHAPTER IV.

BENEVOLENCE.

§ 1. THE virtue of Practical Wisdom is necessarily inclusive of all others: for we conceive that a wise man will have a clear discernment of the true ultimate end or ends of action, and of the right means to the attainment of such end or ends, and therefore of all duties and virtues, and that he will certainly never fail to act in accordance with this knowledge. In fact, the names of the special virtues may be regarded as denoting special departments of this knowledge, which it is now our business to examine more closely.

When, however, we contemplate these, we discern that there is another virtue, Justice, which seemed to the Fathers of Philosophy in some way to include or correspond to all virtues: and, when we go somewhat lower down the stream of thought, we find another virtue, Benevolence, either regarded as a part of Justice, or placed beside and connected with it, or held to comprehend it: and in modern times, since the revival of independent ethical speculation, there have always been thinkers who maintained, in some form, the view that Benevolence was a supreme and architectonic virtue, comprehending and summing up all the others, and fitted to regulate them and determine their proper limits and mutual relations. The form of this view most current at present is called Utilitarianism, the principles and method of which will be more fully discussed hereafter: but we may note here these claims to supremacy made on behalf of Benevolence and Justice, as a ground for giving prominence to the discussion of these; and especially of Benevolence, as it may be thought to be due to an ambiguity of

language that Δικαιοσύνη was taken to stand for all virtue, and no one would now maintain this of Justice.

It was before said of the maxims of Duty generally, that they appear to relate primarily to actions, or at least intentions, and only secondarily to motives or dispositions. But this scarcely seems to be the case with Benevolence. No doubt the duty of Benevolence includes the duty of acting or intending to act in such a way as to increase the happiness of others: but it seems to be primarily something more internal than this. The maxim of Benevolence would be commonly said to be, "that we ought to love all our fellow-men," or "all our fellow-creatures." Now by Love is commonly meant an Affection, or emotion caused by the presence or representation of a person, including, along with other elements, a desire of his good or happiness. But this affection seems to be not directly under the control of the will: hence Kant and other moralists have explained that what is morally prescribed as the Duty of Benevolence is not the emotion, but the settled disposition of the will to seek the happiness of those whom we are commanded to love. And though even this, as a permanent disposition, is only indirectly under the control of the will (for though at each time of deliberation we seem to have the power of directing the immediate action in accordance with such disposition, as regards the future we can only make earnest resolves, and these will have only a limited effect on the subsequent bent and settled state of the will): it is certainly in our power to frame benevolent resolutions at any moment, and to make these resolves may be called the internal Duty of Benevolence.

It may be thought, however, that the affection proper can also be cultivated; and that, if so, it is a higher excellence than the mere disposition of the will, as resulting in more excellent actions: for there is thought to be something harsh and dry in the taste of benefits conferred without affection, and they seem to be less acceptable to the recipients than those that spring from love and are lovingly bestowed. If then we admit this, it will be a duty to cultivate the affection: and indeed this would seem (no less than the permanent disposition to do good) to be an effect of repeated beneficent resolves and actions. Even the poets and popular moralizers have observed that a benefit tends

to excite love in the agent towards the person benefited, no less than in the latter towards the agent. It seems, however, that this effect is less certain than the production of the disposition; and that some men are naturally so unattractive to others that these can feel no affection towards them, though they may entertain benevolent dispositions of will. At any rate it is thought to be a duty generally, and till we find the effort fruitless, to cultivate kind affections towards those whom we ought to benefit; not only by doing kind actions (which are immediately a duty, and therefore need not be prescribed as a means to an end), but by placing ourselves under any natural influences which experience shews to have a tendency to produce affection.

But we have to ascertain more particularly the nature of the actions in which this affection or disposition of will is shewn. They are described popularly as "doing good." Now we have before[1] noticed the radical ambiguity in this word "good," in that it sometimes signifies the object of moral approbation or admiration, and sometimes the object of desire generally, or pleasure, or its causes. It follows that the phrase "doing good" may be used in different meanings; and we find that it is sometimes said, especially by the more severe moralists, that the real way to "do good" to people is to increase their Virtue or aid their progress towards Perfection. Perhaps, however, this usually means that Virtue is the most important source of happiness, and that therefore (rather than *per se*) the promotion of our neighbours' Virtue should be the chief aim of true benevolence. Indeed there are found, even among Stoical moralists, some—such as Kant—who take a precisely opposite view, and argue that my neighbour's Virtue or Perfection cannot be an end to me, because it depends upon the free exercise of his own volition, which I cannot help or hinder. But this seems to involve a too purely and one-sidedly Libertarian view of human action: and it might equally be argued that I cannot *cultivate* Virtue in myself, but only practise it from moment to moment. But common experience shews that we can cultivate good dispositions in ourselves, even those whose effects we cannot at any moment realize at will: and Common Sense always assumes

[1] Cf. I. c. 7, 9.

this to be possible and prescribes it as a duty. And surely it may be taken as equally undeniable that we can cultivate them in others: and indeed such cultivation is clearly the object not only of education, but of a large part of social action, and partly at least of all our expression of praise and blame, and even to some extent of Law. And if Virtue is an ultimate end for ourselves, and to be cultivated for its own sake, it must be so also for our neighbour. And we see that in the case of intense individual affection, the friend or lover generally longs that the beloved should be excellent and admirable as well as happy: perhaps, however, this is because love involves preference, and the lover desires that the beloved should be really worthy of preference as well as actually preferred by him, as otherwise there is a conflict between Love and Reason.

At any rate we cannot find, in the common view of what Benevolence bids us promote for others, any clear selection indicated between the different and possibly conflicting elements of the common notion of Good. We may say, however, that the promotion of Happiness is practically the chief part of what Common Sense conceives to be prescribed as the external duty of Benevolence: and for clearness' sake we will confine our attention to this in the remainder of the discussion[1]. And by happiness we are not to understand (as Kant seems to do) the gratification of the actual desires of others: for on reflection all would admit that many men do not actually desire their real or best happiness: but we must mean the greatest possible pleasure for them and least possible pain—in short, such happiness as was taken to be the rational end of each individual in the system of Egoistic Hedonism. It is this that Rational Benevolence bids us provide for others: and in so far as the promptings of affection ever diverge from this, they seem to miss their true end. And indeed, if one who loves is led from affectionate sympathy with the longings of the beloved to gratify those longings when the gratification is attended with an overplus of painful consequences, we commonly say that such affection is weak and foolish.

§ 2. We have further to ask towards whom this disposition or affection is to be maintained, and to what extent. And, first,

[1] A further reason for so doing will appear in the sequel. Cf. *post*, c. 14.

it is not clear whether we owe benevolence to men alone, or to other animals also. Or, rather, there is a general agreement that we ought to treat all animals with kindness; but it is questioned whether this is directly due to sentient beings as such, or merely prescribed as a means of cultivating kindly dispositions towards men. This point Common Sense does not precisely determine. But it is more important to consider how our benevolence ought to be distributed among our fellow-men. And here we may conveniently make clear the view of Common Sense by contrasting it with that of Utilitarianism. For Utilitarianism is sometimes said to resolve all virtue into Universal Benevolence: it does not, however, prescribe that we should love all men equally, but that we should aim at Happiness generally as our ultimate end, and so consider the happiness of any one individual as equally important with the equal happiness of any other, as an element of this total: and should distribute our kindness so as to make this total as great as possible, in whatever way this result may be attained. Practically of course the distribution will be unequal: as each man will promote the general happiness best by rendering services to a limited number, and to some more than others: but the inequality, on this theory, is secondary and derivative. But Common Sense holds that the right distribution of benevolence is primarily and radically unequal: for it is thought to be intuitively certain that we ought to love all men indeed, but more especially those who stand in special relations to us, and that the dues of kindness ought to be proportioned and graduated according to these relations. We have need therefore of intuitive principles for deciding the order of these relations: and obviously, if our maxim of Benevolence is to furnish us with practical guidance, it is of great importance that these principles should be clear and precise: so that if in distributing our benefits we have to choose between persons in different relations (as between a brother and a benefactor, or between wife-and-children and fellow-countrymen generally), we may know which obligation is the stronger.

Before, however, we investigate these principles, we may notice an ambiguity in the arrangement of the subject, which, like most difficulties of classification, deserves attentive con-

sideration, as it depends upon important characteristics of the matter to be classified. We are accustomed to distinguish and even contrast Benevolence (or Virtues of the Affections) and Justice: and though we may of course exercise both towards the same persons, still we commonly consider the spheres of duty corresponding respectively to each as mutually exclusive, and that Benevolence begins where Justice ends. At the same time, if we consider Affection, and the services that spring from affection, as a debt that ought to be paid to persons in certain relations, the moral notion under which these duties are presented to us is hardly distinguishable from that of Justice. It is sometimes given as a distinction between Justice and Benevolence, that the services which Justice prescribes can be claimed as a right by their recipient, while Benevolence is essentially unconstrained: but we certainly think (e. g.) that parents have a right to filial affection and to the services that naturally spring from it. It may be said, however, that the duties of Affection are essentially indefinite, while those we classify under the head of Justice are precisely defined: and no doubt this is partly true. We not only find it hard to say exactly how much a son owes his parent, but we are even reluctant to investigate this: we do not think that he ought to ask for a precise measure of his duty, in order that he may do just so much and no more; while a great part of Justice consists in the observance of stated agreements. At the same time, this distinction can scarcely be maintained as a ground of classification; for we seem to need as precise a definition as possible of all moral obligations, in order to the exact fulfilment of the complex and conflicting duties that life frequently presents: and such a definition is, as we shall presently see, as hard to obtain in some departments of Justice as it is anywhere else. Perhaps it must be admitted that there is a certain amount of ambiguous territory between these two virtues as commonly conceived: certain duties that might be fairly ranked under either head. However, it seems best to treat in the present place of all duties that arise out of relations where affection naturally and normally exists, and where it ought to be cultivated, and where its absence is deplored if not blamed. For all are agreed that there are such duties, the non-performance of which is a ground for censure,

over and above the obligations imposed by law, or arising out of specific contract, which will come under a different head.

Beyond these duties, again, there seems to be a region of performance where the services rendered are not of debt: and with regard to this, too, there is some difficulty in stating the view of Intuitive or Common Sense morality. We have seen that, in the ordinary application of the notion of Virtue, its sphere does not coincide exactly with that of Duty: for Virtue is something that we praise, and we do not praise the performance of Duty when it is easy, and what all or most men would do, and what a man would be blamed for not doing. And similarly there are some virtuous acts which a man is not thought to be exactly bound to do. We have to ask, therefore, whether services rendered from affection, over and above what Duty prescribes, are to be considered Virtuous; and whether the affection itself (which, as not directly voluntary, cannot be strictly called a virtue) is to be regarded as an excellence and worthy of admiration, and something that we should desire to attain. Now certainly the disposition to render services to mankind generally, and promote their well-being, is thought to be virtuous, being indeed that which is commonly known as the Virtue of Benevolence: and we scarcely think such a disposition can exist in excess. And if it springs out of natural warmth and kindliness of feeling towards human beings generally, it is in some respects more attractive and admirable than that which results from effort and resolve, and, if equally enlightened, seems to attain its end more perfectly: although we should also praise and call virtuous those who devote themselves to the service of mankind without general affection, because such service is right and noble: and we should perhaps find more *merit* in this latter service. Though it must, I think, be allowed on the other hand, that the more "rational" the benevolent impulse is,—i.e. the more it is combined with the habit of considering the complex consequences of different courses of action that may be presented as alternatives, and comparing the amounts of happiness to others respectively resulting from them,—the more good will be caused by it on the whole. And since there seems to be a certain natural incompatibility between this habit of calculation and comparison and

the spontaneous fervour of kindly impulse, Common Sense is somewhat puzzled which to prefer; and takes refuge in an ideal that transcends this incompatibility and includes the two.

Still we may say that Common Sense clearly regards Affection as an excellence, when it is thus universal in its scope: and at the same time praises as virtuous the resolve to render services to mankind, without any emotional prompting. And the same may be said of the more restricted impulse to promote the well-being of one's country: indeed in some ages and countries Patriotism has been regarded as chief among the virtues.

But with regard to more restricted affections, such as those which we feel for relations and friends, a doubt would be raised whether they are to be considered as moral excellences and praised and cultivated as such.

Now first, to avoid confusion, we must remark that Love is not merely a desire to do good to the object beloved, although it always involves such a desire. It is primarily a pleasurable emotion, which seems to depend upon a certain sense of union with another person, and is aroused most strongly by his presence. It hence includes, besides the benevolent impulse, a desire of the society of the beloved: and this element may predominate over the former, and even conflict with it, so that the true interests of the beloved may be sacrificed. In this case we call the affection selfish, and do not praise it at all, but rather blame. But even if we consider Love merely as a benevolent impulse, can we consider this impulse in itself an excellence? And again, in the intimate relations in which such affections usually spring up, is it virtuous and praiseworthy to do such acts as affection would prompt, beyond the limit of duty? Perhaps Common Sense does not answer these questions very definitely: but it rather inclines to the negative in both cases. For we commonly think it best that such services should spring from purely spontaneous feeling, and we scarcely desire that they should be done without it. At the same time we do not exactly consider the susceptibility to such emotions as a moral excellence, and essential element of Perfection: for it seems agreed that we ought to strive after and cultivate all elements of moral perfection: and per-

haps such effort is undesirable in the case of these individual affections, at least beyond the point up to which such affection is commonly thought to be a duty. And though we think it natural and desirable that in general each person should feel strong affection for a few individuals, and that his efforts to promote directly the well-being of others should be, to a great extent, correspondingly restricted: we do not find it good that he should render services to special individuals beyond what he is bound to render, and such as are the natural expression of an eager and overflowing affection, without feeling any affection to express. Although, as was before said, in certain intimate relations we do not approve of the limits of duty being too exactly measured.

It would seem then, that while we praise and admire enthusiastic Benevolence and Patriotism, and are touched and charmed by the spontaneous lavish outflow of Gratitude, Pity, Friendship and the domestic affections: still what chiefly concerns us as moralists, under this head, is the ascertainment of the right rules of distribution of services and kind acts, in so far as we consider the rendering of these to be a duty owed to persons who are placed in special circumstances and relations. For we seem not to blame a man, who within the limits fixed by these duties (and the other absolute rules of morality) pursues his own individual aims: and though if his pursuit be sensual pleasure, or perhaps his own gratification in any form, we think him somewhat ignoble, still the opinion of refined persons recognises other noble and worthy aims besides those of philanthropy or personal affection: such as the cultivation of knowledge or any of the fine arts.

§ 3. What then are the duties that we owe to our fellow-men? Perhaps the mere enumeration of them is not difficult. All would agree that we are bound to shew kindness to parents and children and spouse, and to other kinsmen to a certain extent: and to those who have rendered services to us and any others whom we may have admitted to our intimacy and called friends: and to neighbours and to our fellow-countrymen more than others: and perhaps we may say to those of our own race more than to black or yellow men, and generally to human beings in proportion to their affinity to ourselves. And

to our country as a corporate whole we believe ourselves to owe the greatest sacrifices when occasion calls (but in a lower stage of civilization this debt is thought to be due rather to one's king or chief): and perhaps to smaller corporations of which we are members a similar obligation holds in a less degree. And to all men with whom we may be brought into relation we are held to owe slight services, and such as may be rendered without inconvenience: but those who are in distress or urgent need have a claim on us for special kindness. These are generally recognised claims: but we find considerable difficulty and divergence, when we attempt to determine more precisely their extent and relative obligation. And yet this attempt seems necessary. For though we rather shrink from undertaking to define very exactly the duties of affection, this is because such a definition is most commonly demanded when the issue seems to lie between Duty and Self-interest. When conflicting duties present themselves, we can hardly avoid such a demand, if we profess to furnish a complete method for determining right conduct. For it will not suffice to say that the extent and comparative force of these different obligations vary according to circumstances and must be determined as occasion arises: for we still require to know generally what kinds of circumstances have weight and how much. And if it be said that this must be settled in each particular case by a certain trained instinct or tact: then, firstly, the scientific character of the Intuitive method is so far abandoned: for our moral principles cannot be compared to the premises of (e.g.) geometry, if they cannot be made definite and precise. And, secondly, this stereotypes the confusion and perplexity that we are trying to avoid. For instinct varies and is uncertain, and sometimes gives no clear guidance at all: and yet we are convinced that the right course must be the same for all, and ought to be determined upon universal principles; and it is for these that men appeal to the moralist.

At the same time I must confess that I cannot by reflecting on Common Sense elicit clear and definite principles for determining the right distribution of kindness. And the task seems more hopeless when we compare the customs and common opinions respecting such distribution, which exist

among ourselves, with those of other ages and countries. For example, in earlier ages of society a peculiar sacredness was attached to the tie of hospitality, and claims arising out of it were considered peculiarly stringent: but this has changed as hospitality in the progress of civilization has become a luxury rather than a necessary, and we do not now think that we owe much to a man because we have asked him to dinner. Or again we may take an instance where the alteration is perhaps actually going on—the claims of kindred in respect of bequest. We should now commonly think that a man ought to leave his property to his children, unless they had shewn themselves undeserving: but, if he has no children we think he may do what he likes with it, unless any of his brothers or sisters are in poverty, in which case compassion seems to blend with and invigorate the evanescent claim of consanguinity. But in an age not long past a childless man was held to be morally bound to leave his money to his collateral relatives: and thus we are naturally led to conjecture that in the not distant future, any similar obligation to children—unless in want—will have vanished out of men's minds. A similar change might be traced in the commonly recognised duty of children to parents. Such reflections as these impress on us the necessity, if we are still to retain our confidence in the Intuitional Method, of at least applying rigorous scrutiny to current opinions respecting right and wrong in these matters: in order that we may distinguish real intuitions of rightness from the blind sense of obligation arising out of mere custom.

It may however be urged that this variation of custom is no obstacle to the definition of duty, because we may lay down that the customs of any society ought to be obeyed so long as they are established, just as the laws ought, although both customs and laws may be changed from time to time. And no doubt it is generally expedient to conform to established customs: still, on reflection, we see that it cannot be laid down as an absolute duty. For the cases of Custom and Law are not similar: as in every progressive community there is a regular and settled mode of abrogating laws that are found bad: but customs cannot be thus formally abolished, and we only get rid of them by private individuals refusing to obey them: and

therefore it must be sometimes right to do this, if some customs are vexatious and pernicious, as we frequently judge those of antique and alien communities to be. And if we say that customs should generally be obeyed, but that they may be disobeyed when they reach a certain degree of inexpediency, our method obviously resolves itself into Utilitarianism: for we cannot reasonably rest the general obligation upon one principle, and determine its limits and exceptions by another. As we have seen, it is the contention of Intuitionists that there are some clear, certain, absolute duties, known to us by intuition: of which, therefore, the limits must be given in the intuition that reveals them.

§ 4. But in order to ascertain exactly how far we possess such intuitions in the present case, let us examine in more detail what Common Sense seems to affirm in respect of the duties above enumerated.

These duties seem to range themselves under four heads. There are (1) those arising out of Involuntary Relationships (Kindred, Neighbourhood, Citizenship, &c.): (2) those of Friendship and all relationships voluntarily contracted: (3) those that spring from special services received, or Duties of Gratitude: and (4) those that seem due to special need, or Duties of Pity. It should be said that the classification is not quite plain in all cases. For example, among the duties of Kindred those owed by children to parents naturally occupy a prominent place. But these might also be brought under the head of Gratitude. And hence arises the first difficulty in defining this particular duty. For it would be agreed that children owe to their parents respect and kindness generally, and assistance in case of infirmity or any special need: but it may be doubted whether this is on account of the relationship alone, or of services rendered during infancy, and whether it be due to cruel or neglectful parents. Most perhaps would say, here and in other cases, that nearness of blood alone constituted a claim: but they would find it hard to agree upon its exact force[1].

[1] It may be said that a child owes gratitude to the authors of its existence. But life alone, apart from any provision for making life happy, seems a boon of doubtful value, and one that scarcely excites gratitude when it was not conferred from any regard for the recipient.

But, apart from this, there seems great difference of opinion as to what is due from children to parents who have performed their duty; as, for example, how far obedience is included. For as long as the child is in its parent's guardianship or dependent on them for support, it is obviously bound to obedience under heavy external penalties: but it is questioned how far this subordination ought to continue further, and whether a son or a daughter ought to oppose a parent's wishes (e. g.) in marrying or choosing a profession. And here it may seem that there is practically a difference between the case of rich parents and that of poor: as the former have still the important service to render of bequeathing an inheritance. Still we cannot take this into consideration in determining the ideal of filial duty: for to this, whatever it may be, the child is thought to be absolutely bound, and not as a *quidproquo* in anticipation of future benefits: and many would hold that a parent had no moral right to disinherit a child, except as a penalty for a transgression of duty.

And this leads to what we may conveniently examine next, the duty of parents to children. And here again we might classify this under a different head, viz. that of duties arising out of special needs: for no doubt children are naturally objects of compassion on account of their helplessness, to others besides their parents. But on the latter they have a claim of a different kind, springing from the duty which the principle of Benevolence imposes upon all human beings towards all others of not causing pain or any harm, directly or indirectly, except in the way of deserved punishment: for the parent, being the cause of the child's existing in a helpless condition, would be indirectly the cause of the suffering and death that would result to it if neglected. Still this does not seem an adequate explanation of parental duty, as recognised by Common Sense. For we commonly blame a parent who leaves his children entirely to the care of others, even if he pays for their being nourished and trained up to the time at which they can support themselves by their own labour. We think that he owes them affection (as far as this can be said to be a duty) and the tender and watchful care that naturally springs from affection: and, if he can afford it, somewhat more than the necessary minimum of food,

clothing, and education. Still it does not seem clear how far beyond this he is bound to go. It is easy to say broadly that he ought to promote his children's happiness by all means in his power: and no doubt it is natural for a good parent to find his own best happiness in his children's: and we are disposed to blame any one who prefers his own interest to theirs. And yet it seems unreasonable that he should purchase a small increase of their happiness by a great sacrifice of his own: and moreover there are other worthy and noble ends which may (and do) come into competition with this. To take instances of actual occurrence: one parent is led to give up some important and valuable work, which perhaps no one else can or will do, in order to leave his children a little more wealth: another brings them to the verge of starvation in order to perfect an invention or prosecute scientific researches. We seem to condemn either extreme: yet what can be stated, in abstract terms, as clearly the true mean?

Again, as we have seen, some think that a parent has no right to bequeath his inheritance away from his children, unless they have been undutiful: and there are countries in which this is even forbidden by law. Others, however, hold that children as such have no claims to their parents' wealth: but only if there is a tacit understanding that they will succeed to it.

It would be tedious to go in detail through all the degrees of consanguinity, as it is perhaps clear that our conception of the mutual duties of kinsmen becomes vaguer as the kinship becomes more remote. Among children of the same parents, brought up together, affection of more or less strength grows up so naturally and commonly, that we regard those who do not love their brothers and sisters with a certain aversion and moral contempt, as somewhat inhuman: and we think that in any case the services and kind acts which naturally spring from affection ought to be rendered to some extent; but the extent seems quite undefined. And even towards remoter kinsmen we think that a certain flow of kindly feeling will attend the representation of consanguinity in men of good dispositions. Some indeed still think that cousins have a moral right to a man's inheritance in default of nearer heirs, and to assistance in any need: but it seems equally common

to hold that they can at most claim to be selected *ceteris paribus* as the recipients of bounty, and that an unpromising cousin should not be preferred to a promising stranger.

Going further, we may remark that it is disputed whether affinity of race is a reasonable ground for national alliances: whether e.g.—as some urge—Anglo-Saxons should stand by one another, and those of Latin race, and Europeans against Asiatics. And again, it is questioned whether affinity should be made a principle of reconstruction of the corporate wholes which we call nations: for many have maintained that this principle ought to be followed even at the cost of sedition and civil war, while others deny it any validity.

§ 5. I have placed Neighbourhood along with Kindred among the relations out of which a certain claim for mutual services is thought to spring. However, no one perhaps would say that mere local juxtaposition is in itself a ground of duties: it seems rather that neighbours naturally feel more sympathy with one another than with strangers, as the tie of common humanity is strengthened even by such conjunction and mutual association as mere neighbourhood (without cooperation or friendship) may involve, and a man in whom this effect is not produced is thought somewhat inhuman. And so in large towns where this mutual sympathy does not so naturally grow up (for all the townsmen are in a sense neighbours, and one cannot easily sympathise with each individual in a multitude, and therefore we form the habit of confining our sympathies to particular channels, determined on other grounds than neighbourhood) the tie of neighbourhood is felt to be relaxed, and neighbour only claims from neighbour, as the nearest man, what one man may claim from another. For there are some services, slight in ordinary times but greater in the case of exceptional need, which any man is thought to have a right to ask from any other: and thus, the claim being so general, a trifling circumstance may make it natural that the service should be asked from one person rather than another: such as any degree of kinship (since the representation of this tends to produce a feeling of union and consequent sympathy), and so even the fact of belonging to the same province, as creating a slight probability of community of origin—thus Scotchmen

are said to assist Scotchmen rather than others—and again similarities of various kinds, as one sympathizes more easily with one's like, and so persons naturally seek aid in distress from those of the same age, or sex, or rank, or profession. The duty of neighbourhood seems therefore only a special application of the duty of general benevolence or humanity. And the claim of Fellow-countrymen is of the same kind: that is, if they are taken as individuals, for one's relation to one's country as a whole is thought to be of a different kind, and to involve much more stringent obligations.

Still the duties of Patriotism are difficult to formulate. For the mere obedience to the laws of a country which morality requires from all its inhabitants seems to come under another head: and aliens are equally bound to this. And in the case of most social functions which men undertake, patriotism is at least not a prominent nor indispensable motive: for they undertake them primarily for the sake of payment: and having undertaken them, are bound by Justice and Good Faith to perform them adequately. However, if any of the functions of government are unpaid, we consider that men exhibit patriotism in performing them: for though it is plausible to say that they get their payment in social distinction, still on reflection this view does not appear to be quite appropriate: for social distinction is intended to express feelings of honour and respect, and we cannot properly render these as part of a bargain, but only as a tribute paid to virtue or excellence of some kind. But how far any individual is bound to undertake such functions is not quite clear: and the question seems generally decided by considerations of expediency, except in so far as duties of this kind devolve upon all the citizens in a free country, as is the case to some extent. Among these the duty of fighting the national enemies is prominent in many countries: and even where this function has become a salaried and voluntarily adopted profession, we call it in a peculiar sense the "service of one's country," and think it at least desirable and best that it should be performed with feelings of patriotism: as we find it somewhat degrading and repulsive that a man should slaughter his fellow-men for hire. And in great crises of national existence

the affection of Patriotism is naturally intensified: and even in ordinary times we praise a man who renders services to his country over and above the common duties of citizenship. But whether a citizen is at any time morally bound to more than certain legally or constitutionally determined duties, does not seem to be clear: nor, again, whether he can rightfully abnegate these altogether by voluntary expatriation: and on this latter point the prescriptions of law are different in different countries.

Nor, finally, does there seem to be any *consensus* as to what each man owes to his fellow-men, as such. The Utilitarian doctrine, as we have seen, is that each man ought to consider the happiness of any other as *theoretically* of equal importance with his own, and only of less importance *practically*, in so far as he is better able to realize the latter. And it seems to me difficult to say decidedly that this is *not* the ideal of Benevolence, as commonly recognised. But there is certainly also current a lower and narrower estimate of our duties to humanity generally: and the maxim of Benevolence, as intuitively apprehended, seems to fluctuate between the two. The lower view seems to recognise (1) a negative duty to abstain from causing pain or harm to any of our fellow-men, except in the way of deserved punishment: which includes the duty of making reparation for any harm that we may have done them[1]: and (2) a positive duty to render, when occasion offers, such services as require either no sacrifice on our part, or at least one very much less in importance than the service rendered. Beyond this somewhat indefinite limit of Duty extends the Virtue of Benevolence without limit: for excess is not possible in doing good to others, nor in the disposition to do it, unless it leads us to neglect definite duties.

Under the notion of Benevolence as just defined, the minor rules of Gentleness, Politeness, Courtesy, &c. may be

[1] How far we are bound to make reparation when the harm is involuntary, and such as could not have been prevented by ordinary care on our part, is not clear: but it will be convenient to defer the consideration of this till the next chapter: as the whole of this department of duty is commonly placed under the head of Justice.

brought, in so far as they prescribe the expression of general goodwill and abstinence from anything that may cause pain to others in conversation and social demeanour. There is, however, an important part of Politeness which it may be well to notice and discuss separately, namely, the duty of shewing marks of Reverence to those to whom they are properly due.

Reverence we may define as the feeling which accompanies the recognition of Superiority or Worth in others. It does not seem to be necessarily in itself benevolent, though often accompanied by some degree of love. But its ethical characteristics seem analogous to those of benevolent affection, in so far as, while it is not a feeling directly under the control of the will, we yet expect it under certain circumstances and morally dislike its absence, and perhaps commonly consider the expression of it to be sometimes a duty, even when the feeling itself is absent.

Still, as to this latter duty of expressing reverence, there seems very great divergence of opinion. For the feeling seems to be naturally excited by all kinds of superiority: not merely moral and intellectual excellences, but also superiorities of rank and position: and indeed in the common behaviour of men it is to the latter that it is more regularly and formally rendered. And yet, again, it is commonly said that Reverence is more properly due to the former, as being more real and intrinsic superiorities: and many think that to shew any reverence to men of rank and position rather than to others is servile and degrading: and some even dislike the marks of respect which in most countries are exacted by official superiors from their subordinates, saying that obedience legally defined is all that these properly owe.

And again, some hold that Reverence, to some extent, is due to all men, except they deserve contempt or aversion, and that politeness prescribes the expression of this. And certainly the polite gestures used in refined society such as bowing, taking off the hat, &c. and polite phrases in letters (as that one is an "obedient humble servant," and requests that others will do one the "favour," the "honour," &c.) seem intended to express a recognition of superiority in the person to whom they are addressed: and even when addressed to inferiors they seem to please because they give a shadowy gratification of that

desire of superiority which exists in most men. But some think that such courtesies are due only to persons of a certain rank, while others hold that they ought to be paid to all men, if to any.

But again, it is doubted whether, since there are many men of all ranks for whom we feel neither reverence nor kindness, we ought to exhibit towards them the customary symbols of these feelings. For some say that this is hypocritical and insincere: others, however, urge that these courtesies do not really deceive, and that to omit them would give pain. But if they do not deceive at all, it is hard to see how they can give any pleasure: at any rate they must produce a temporary illusion, and the line between illusion and deception is hard to draw, both in theory and in practice.

It seems then that on all this subject of Politeness, we must conclude that the common notions of duty are somewhat obscure and confused.

§ 6. We have next to consider the duties of Affection that arise out of relationships voluntarily assumed. Of these the most important is the Conjugal Relation. And here it is important to know whether it be the duty of human beings generally to enter into this relation. It is no doubt natural and normal to do so, and most persons are prompted to it by strong desires: but in so far as it can be said to be prescribed by Common Sense, it does not seem an independent duty, but derivative from and subordinate to the general maxims of Prudence and Benevolence. For by marrying and producing children men generally cause happiness to themselves and to others: but it is not clear that this is always the case, and that one may not be happier and do more good to mankind in other ways than by hampering oneself with the cares of a family, especially when the population of one's country is thought to be increasing more rapidly than its subsistence[1]. And in all modern civilized societies, law and custom leave the conjugal union perfectly optional: but the conditions under

[1] We may observe that if the rule of "living according to Nature" were really accepted as the first principle of Conduct—as some moralists have proposed—marriage would certainly seem to be a universal duty: but just this instance seems to shew that the principle is not accepted by Common Sense.

which it may be formed, and to a certain extent the mutual rights and duties arising out of it, are carefully laid down by law. Now, so far, conjugal duty might seem to be included under the general head of Law-observance: but, first, it is nowhere held that in this relation the legal duty is the measure of the moral: and secondly, this department of law is thought more than others to be properly governed by independent moral principles, and to protect, as it were, by an outer barrier, the kind of relation which morality prescribes. It is not therefore alien to our purpose to enquire what are the moral principles on which the law of marriage ought to be based.

First, then, it is thought right to prohibit marriages between near kinsmen as incestuous. The definition of incest, however, has varied much in different ages and countries: and though in our present society it is sufficiently clear as far as blood-relationship is concerned, there is much dispute in respect of relations by marriage as to "whether a man may marry his deceased wife's sister," and so forth. This dispute (where it is not made a religious one) is commonly conducted upon a utilitarian basis: but the intermarriage of near blood-relations is thought to be prohibited by a primary and absolute rule, independently of utilitarian considerations.

Secondly, in Christian societies it is generally thought to be demonstrable, apart from Revelation, that the marriage union ought to be exclusively monogamic. However, I do not think that this is commonly stated as an independent intuition: for I find that reasons are always given for it, and most frequently utilitarian reasons: as (1) that as the numbers of the two sexes are approximately equal, this arrangement alone can secure to all at least a fair chance of marriage, and (2) that no other regulation is as conducive to domestic happiness. Again, most would agree that the marriage-contract ought always to be made with the design that the union shall be permanent. Still, they would hardly hold this to be a clear first principle: and it is widely disputed how far the bond should be actually indissoluble: for some hold that in case of conjugal infidelity or even insurmountable mutual aversion the union ought practically to cease, but that the parties should be still pro-

hibited from forming fresh marriages: while others hold that it ought to be dissolved without this qualification in the case of infidelity: others, again, think that divorce ought to be allowed when both parties wish for it. And each of these views is supported by the laws and customs of some part of modern society: and when the propriety of such laws and customs is discussed the appeal is rather to utilitarian considerations than to intuitive principles: and in so far as we can point to any accepted intuition on the subject it relates rather to the ideal of conduct than to what it is desirable to enforce legally, or even to impose morally as strict duty. For all or nearly all would agree that it is clearly desirable and best that marriages should be permanent. But most, again, would agree that conjugal duties cannot be adequately performed without a strong and warm affection: and as affection is not certainly within the control of the will, some naturally conclude that in cases where it has ceased and cannot be revived, the union ought to cease also. Others, however, say that affection sufficient for tolerable happiness may always be attained by moral effort: or that even if it cannot, the happiness of the few must be sacrificed to the great general advantages, both to the spouses and to their children, resulting from matrimonial stability.

And indeed there seems to be no little difference of opinion as to the kind of feeling which is morally indispensable to this relation. For it is natural and normal for men and women not to desire to marry without intense and exclusive affection: and some would lay this down as a duty, and say that the bodily union without such affection was degrading even though sanctioned by law: while others would consider this a mere matter of taste, or at least of prudence, provided there was no mutual deception: and between these two views we might insert several different shades of opinion.

Nor, again, is there agreement as to the external duties arising out of the relationship. For all would lay down conjugal fidelity, and mutual assistance (according to the customary division of labour between men and women—unless this should be modified by mutual agreement). But beyond this we find divergence: for some state that "the marriage

contract binds each party, whenever individual gratification is concerned, to prefer the happiness of the other party to its own[1]:" while others would say that this degree of unselfishness is certainly admirable, but as a mere matter of duty it is enough if each considers the other's happiness equally with his (or her) own. And as to the powers and liberties that ought to be allowed to the wife, and the obedience due from her to the husband—I need scarcely at the present time (1874) waste space in proving that there is no *consensus* among moral persons.

§ 7. The conjugal relation is, in its origin, of free choice, but when it has once been formed, the duties of affection that arise out of it are commonly thought to be analogous to those arising out of relations of consanguinity. It therefore holds an intermediate position between these latter, and ordinary friendships, partnerships, and associations, which men are equally free to make and to dissolve. Now most associations that men form are for certain definite ends, determined by express contract or tacit understanding: and the duty arising out of them is merely that of fidelity to such contract or understanding. But this does not seem to be the case with what are properly called Friendships: for although Friendship frequently arises among persons associated for other ends, still the relation is always conceived to have its end in itself, and to be formed primarily for the development of mutual affection between the friends, and the pleasure which attends this. Still, it is thought that when such an affection has once been formed it creates mutual duties which did not previously exist: we have therefore to inquire how far this is the case, and on what principles these can be determined.

Now here a new kind of difficulty has to be added to those which we have already found in attempting to formulate Common Sense. For we find some who say that, as it is essential to Friendship that the mutual kindly feeling, and the services springing from it, should be spontaneous and unforced, neither the one nor the other be imposed as a duty; and, in short, that this department of life should be fenced from the intrusion of moral notions, and left to the free play of natural instinct.

[1] Cf. Wayland, *Elements of Moral Science*, Bk. II. P. 2, class 2, § 2.

And this doctrine all would perhaps admit to a certain extent: as, indeed, we have accepted it with regard to all the deeper flow and finer expression of feeling even in the domestic relations: for it seemed pedantic and futile to prescribe rules for this, or even (though we naturally admire and praise any not ungraceful exhibition of intense and genuine affection) to delineate an ideal of excellence for all to aim at. Still, there seemed to be an important sphere of strict duty—however hard to define—in the relations of children to parents, &c., and even in the case of friendship it seems contrary to common sense to recognise no such sphere; as it not unfrequently occurs to us to judge that one friend has behaved wrongly to another, and to speak as if there were a clearly cognizable code of behaviour in such relations.

Perhaps, however, we may say that all clear cases of wrong conduct towards friends come under the general formula of breach of understanding. Friends not unfrequently make definite promises of service, but we need not consider these, as their violation is prohibited by a different and clearer moral rule. But further, as all love is understood to include[1] a desire for the happiness of its object, the profession of friendship seems to bind one to seek this happiness to an extent proportionate to such profession. Now common benevolence (cf. *ante*, § 5) prescribes at least that we should render to other men such services as we can render without any sacrifice, or with a sacrifice so trifling as to be quite out of proportion to the service rendered. And since the profession of friendship (though the term is used to include affections of various degree) must imply a greater interest in one's friend's happiness than in that of men in general, it must announce a willingness to make more or less considerable sacrifices for him, if occasion offers. If then we decline to make such sacrifices, we do wrong by failing to fulfil natural and legitimate expectations. So far there seems no difficulty except the indefiniteness inevitably arising from the wide range of meanings covered by the term Friendship. But further questions arise in consequence of the changes of feeling to which human nature is

[1] It was before observed that this is only one—and not always the most prominent—element of the whole emotional state which we call love.

liable: first, whether it is our duty to resist such changes as much as we can; and secondly, whether if this effort fails, and love diminishes or departs, we ought still to maintain a disposition to render services corresponding to our past affection. And on these points there does not seem to be agreement among moral and refined persons. For, on the one hand, it is natural to us to admire fidelity in friendship and stability of affections, and we commonly regard these as most important excellences of character: and so it seems strange if we are not to aim at these as at all other excellences, as none more naturally stir us to imitation. And hence many would be prepared to lay down that we ought not to withdraw affection once given, unless the friend behaves ill: while some would say that even in this case we ought not to break the friendship unless the crime is very great. Yet, on the other hand, we feel that such affection as is produced by deliberate effort of will is but a poor substitute for that which springs spontaneously, and most refined persons would reject such a boon: while, again, to conceal the change of feeling seems insincere and hypocritical. I have noticed that some extend this latter view so far, that they would have us follow the spontaneous course of feeling even in the domestic relationships: and if common sense rejects this, and it seems a duty so far to force our feelings to flow in legal and customary channels, we should perhaps all the more avoid constraint as regards other affections, and let them flow in old or new courses as nature inclines. Still, all would recognise some limit to this: for it seems too inhuman to treat as a stranger one who has been a friend, unless he has deserved severe punishment.

But as for services, a refined person would not accept such from a former friend who no longer loves one: unless in extreme need, when any kind of tie is, as it were, invigorated by the already strong claim which common humanity gives each man upon all others. Perhaps, therefore, there cannot be a duty to offer such services in any case, when the need is not extreme. Though this inference is not quite clear: for in relations of affection we often praise one party for offering what we rather blame the other for accepting. But it seems that delicate questions of this kind are more naturally referred to canons of

good taste and refined feeling than of morality proper: or at least only included in the scope of morality in so far as we have a general duty to cultivate good taste and refinement of feeling, like other excellences.

On the whole, then, we may say that the chief difficulties in determining the moral obligations of friendship arise (1) from the indefiniteness of the tacit understanding implied in the relation, and (2) from the disagreement which we find as to the extent to which Fidelity is a positive duty. It may be observed that the latter difficulty is especially prominent in respect of those intimacies between persons of different sex which precede and prepare the way for marriage.

§ 8. I pass now to the third head, Gratitude. It has been already observed that the obligation of children to parents is sometimes based upon this: and in other affectionate relationships it commonly blends with and much strengthens the claims that are thought to arise out of the relations themselves: though none of the duties that we have discussed seem referable entirely to gratitude, as we seem to owe services to those whom we profess to love, even if they have rendered none to us. But where gratitude is due, the obligation is especially clear and simple. Indeed the duty of requiting benefits seems to be recognised wherever morality extends: and Intuitionists[1] have justly pointed to this recognition as an instance of a truly universal intuition. Still, though the reality of the obligation is not open to doubt (except of the sweeping and abstract kind with which we have not here to deal), its nature and extent are by no means equally clear.

In the first place, it may be asked whether we are only bound to repay services, or whether we owe the special affection called Gratitude: which seems generally to combine kindly feeling with some sort of emotional recognition of superiority, as the giver of benefits is in a position of superiority to the receiver. On the one hand we seem to think that, in so far as any affection can possibly be a duty, kindly feeling towards benefactors must be such (indeed even Kant seems here to relax the rigidity of his general distinction between the emotion of love and the disposition to benefit, and to prescribe "heartfelt and

[1] e. g. Mansel.

cordial gratitude" as a duty). And yet to persons of a certain temperament this is often difficult, owing to their dislike of the position of inferiority: and this again we consider a right feeling to a certain extent, and call it "independence" or "proper pride:" but this feeling and the effusion of gratitude are hard to mix, and the moralist is often puzzled to prescribe a proper combination of the two. Perhaps it makes a great difference whether the service be lovingly done: as in this case it seems inhuman that there should be no response of affection: whereas if the benefit be coldly given, the mere recognition of the obligation and settled disposition to repay it seem to suffice. And "independence" alone would prompt a man to repay the benefit in order to escape from the burden of obligation. Still, it is doubtful whether in any case we are morally satisfied with this as the sole motive.

It is partly this impatience of obligation which makes a man desirous of giving as requital more than he has received: for otherwise his benefactor has still the superiority of having taken the initiative. But also the worthier motive of affection urges us in the same direction: for here, as in other affectionate services, we do not like to exact a measure of duty, and a certain excess falling short of extravagance seems to be what we admire and praise. Still, in so far as conflict of claims makes it needful to be exact, we think perhaps that an equal return is what the duty of gratitude requires, or rather willingness to make such a return, if it be required, and if it is in our power to make it without neglecting prior claims. For we do not think it obligatory to requite services in all cases, even if it be in our power to do so, if the benefactor appear to be sufficiently supplied with the means of happiness: but if he either demand it or obviously stand in need of it, we think it ungrateful not to make an equal return. But when we try to define this notion of "equal return," obscurity and divergence begin. For (apart from the difficulty of comparing different kinds of services where we cannot make repayment in kind) Equality has two distinct meanings, according as we consider the effort made by the benefactor, or the service rendered to the benefited. Now perhaps if either of these be great, the gratitude is naturally strong: for the apprehension of great earnestness

in another to serve us tends to draw from us a proportionate response of affection: and any great pleasure or relief from pain naturally produces a corresponding emotion of thankfulness to the man who has voluntarily caused this, even though his effort may have been slight. And hence it has been thought, that in proportioning the dues of gratitude we ought to take whichever of the two considerations will give the highest estimate. But this does not seem in accordance with Common Sense: for the benefit may be altogether unacceptable, and it is hard to bind us to repay in full every well-meant blundering effort to serve us: though we feel vaguely that some return should be made even for this. And though it is more plausible to say that we ought to requite an accepted service without weighing the amount of our benefactor's sacrifice, still when we take extreme cases the rule seems not to be true: (e.g.) if a poor man sees a rich one drowning and pulls him out of the water, we do not think that the latter is bound to give as a reward what he would have been willing to give for his life. Still, we should think him niggardly if he only gave his preserver half-a-crown: which, however, would be profuse repayment for the cost of the exertion. Something between the two seems to suit our moral taste: but I see no rational principle upon which the amount can be decided.

The last claim to be considered is that of Special Need. This has been substantially stated already, in investigating the obligation of General Benevolence or Common Humanity. For it was said that we owe to all men such services as we can render by a sacrifice or effort small in comparison with the service: and hence, in proportion as the needs of other men present themselves as urgent, we recognise the duty of relieving them out of our superfluity. But I have thought it right to notice the duty separately, because we are commonly prompted to fulfil it by the specific emotion of Pity or Compassion. Here, again, there seems a doubt how far this feeling ought to be fostered and encouraged: for, on the one hand, it tends to make the action of relieving need not only easier to the agent, but more graceful and pleasing: on the other hand, this feeling is perhaps more likely to lead us astray than the affections previously discussed: as suffering is sometimes wholesome for our fellow-

creatures, and ought not to be relieved at all: while even where this is not the case it is difficult to relieve it without doing more harm than good.

If, passing from this, we consider how we may define the external duty of relieving want, we do not seem to discern a clear rule. Indeed we find ourselves face to face with what is no mere problem of the closet, but a serious practical perplexity to most moral persons at the present day. For many ask whether it is not our duty to refrain from all superfluous indulgences, until we have removed the misery and want that exists around us, as far as it is removable by money. And it is hard to state a principle upon which this question can be answered in the negative: and yet it does not seem that Common Sense answers it in the affirmative.

In conclusion, then, we must admit that while we find a number of broad and more or less indefinite rules unhesitatingly laid down by Common Sense in this department of duty, it is difficult or impossible to state even the most certain of these with such clearness and precision as would enable us to determine exactly the extent of the duty in any case. And yet, as we saw, such exactness seems to be required for the perfection of practice no less than for theoretical completeness, in so far as those duties are liable to come into apparent conflict with each other and with other prescriptions of the moral code.

CHAPTER V.

JUSTICE.

§ 1. WE have seen that in delineating the outline of duty, as intuitively recognised, we have to attempt to give to common terms a definite and precise meaning. This process of definition always requires some reflection and care, and is sometimes one of considerable difficulty. But there is no case where the difficulty is greater, or the result more disputed, than when we try to define Justice.

Before making the attempt, it may be as well to remind the reader what it is that we have to do. We have not to inquire into the derivation of the term "justice," as we are not now studying the history of our ethical thought, but its actual condition. Nor can we profess to furnish a definition which will correspond to every part of the common usage of the term: for many persons are undoubtedly vague and loose in their application of these notions. But it is the assumption of Intuitionism that there is such a thing as Justice, and that a definition may be given of it which will be accepted by all competent judges as presenting, in a clear and explicit form, what they have always felt to be signified by the term, though perhaps obscurely and implicitly. In seeking such a definition we may, so to speak, clip the ragged edge of common usage, but we must not make excision of any considerable portion[1].

[1] Aristotle, in expounding the virtue of Δικαιοσύνη, which corresponds to our Justice, notices that the word has two meanings; in the wider of which it includes in a manner all Virtue: or at any rate the social side or aspect of Virtue generally. The word "Justice" does not appear to be used in English in this comprehensive manner: although the verb "to justify" seems to have this width of meaning: for when I say that one is "justified" in doing so and so, I mean no more than that such conduct is right for him.

Perhaps the first point that strikes us when we reflect upon our notion of Justice is its connexion with Law. There is no doubt that just conduct is to a great extent determined by Law, and in certain applications the two terms seem interchangeable. Thus we speak indifferently of "Law Courts" and "Courts of Justice," and when a man demands Justice, or his just rights, he means generally to demand that Law should be carried into effect. And hence has arisen a crude definition of Justice, which identifies just conduct with conduct in conformity with Law. But reflection shews that we do not mean by Justice, merely the habit of Law-observance. For, first, we do not always call the violators of law unjust, but only of some laws: not, for example, duellists or gamblers. And secondly, we continually perceive that Law does not completely realize Justice: our notion of Justice furnishes a standard with which we compare actual laws, and pronounce them just or unjust. And, thirdly, there is a part of just conduct which lies outside the sphere of Law: for example, we think that a father may be just or unjust to his children in matters where the law leaves (and ought to leave) him free.

We must then distinguish Justice from what has been called the virtue or duty of Order, or Law-observance: and perhaps, if we examine the points of divergence just given, we shall be led to the true definition of Justice.

Let us therefore first ask, What kind of laws are they of which the observance seems generally a realization of Justice? We might answer, Laws which define and secure the rights of individuals. But this is scarcely complete, as Justice is concerned in the apportionment of taxation and public burdens generally as well as privileges, and, again, we demand that punishment should be justly awarded to each offender, though we should not say that a man had "a right" to his share of taxation or punishment. Let us say, then, that the laws in which Justice is or ought to be realized, are laws which distribute and allot to individuals either objects of desire, liberties and privileges, or burdens and restraints, or even pains as such. These latter, however, are only allotted by law to persons who have broken other laws. And as all law is enforced by penalties, we see how the administration of law generally may be

viewed as the administration of Justice, in accordance with this definition: not because all laws are primarily and in their first intention distributive, but because the execution of law generally involves the due allotment of pains and losses and restraints to the persons who violate it. Hence we see how what Aristotle distinguished as Corrective Justice is in a manner Distributive, as well as the Justice to which he confined that term: that, namely, which is realized in the primary distribution of benefits and burdens among the different members of a community. Or, rather, we must say that this distribution ought to realize Justice, for we have seen that it may fail to do so. We have next to ask, therefore, What conditions must be fulfilled in order that laws may be just?

Here, however, it may seem that we are transgressing the limit which divides Ethics, as defined in the present treatise, from Jurisprudence. For Ethics was said to be concerned with the rules which should govern the private conduct of individuals: but it is commonly thought that private persons ought to obey all laws, whether just or unjust, if established by lawful authority. Still, this is doubted in the case of laws that seem extremely unjust: as (e.g.) the Fugitive Slave-law in America before the rebellion. At any rate it seems desirable that we should here digress somewhat into Jural and political discussion, partly in order to elucidate the notion of Justice, which seems to be essentially the same in all three regions, and partly because it is of great practical importance to private persons to know whether the laws and established order of the society in which they live are just or unjust.

Now perhaps the most obvious and commonly stated characteristics of just laws is that they are Equal: and in some departments of legislation, at least, the notion of Justice seems to be exhaustively expressed by that of Equality. We think, for example, that a system of taxation would be perfectly just if it were perfectly equal—if it imposed exactly equal sacrifices upon all. No doubt this notion of "equal sacrifice" is itself not altogether easy to define in theory, and still harder to realize in practice: still we may say that Justice here seems to resolve itself into a kind of equality. However, we cannot affirm generally that all laws ought to affect all persons equally,

for this would leave no place for any laws allotting special privileges and burdens to special classes of the community: but we do not think all such laws necessarily unjust: not, for example, that the eldest sons of particular persons should be appointed hereditary legislators, or that Lord Chancellors should have pensions of £5000 a year. Hence some have said that the only sense in which justice requires a law to be equal is that its execution must affect equally all the individuals belonging to any of the classes specified in the law. And no doubt this rule excludes a very real kind of injustice: it is of the highest importance that judges and administrators should never be persuaded by money or otherwise to shew "respect of persons." So much equality, however, is involved in the very notion of a law, if it be couched in general terms: and it is plain that laws may be equally executed and yet unjust: for example, we should consider a law unjust which compelled only red-haired men to serve in the army, even though it were applied with the strictest impartiality to all red-haired men. In short, all inequality that appears arbitrary, and for which no sufficient reason can be given, is seen to be unjust: whether in laying down the law, or in carrying it out. We have to ask then, What kind of reasons for inequality does Justice admit? and what is the general principle (or principles) from which all such reasons may be deduced? Now it may be observed that a Utilitarianism is more prevalent in the region of Jurisprudence than in that of Ethics proper: hence many thoughtful persons at the present day would give as an answer to the above question, "the Principle of Utility or Expediency." But whether this be the right principle of legislation or not, it does not seem to be that to which the common notion of Justice implicitly refers. For though it might be commonly admitted that any inequality in the incidence of law would be justified, if it could be *proved* that the interests of the community required it, this would rather be from a faith that Justice must in the long run coincide with Expediency, than because we commonly use the latter notion as a mark or criterion of the former. And we may see this in another way, by a careful examination of the Principle of Utility. The most precise form in which Utilitarians present it is as the Principle of seeking

the "Greatest Happiness of the Greatest number." But this formula leaves undecided how the happiness is to be shared among the number. It may be that we could produce the same amount of happiness in several different ways: the utilitarian formula seems to leave it quite indifferent which way we choose: but if one of these ways involved giving a great deal to a few people not specially deserving and very little to the rest, we feel that this would be opposed to our sense of justice. So the 'Principle of Utility' still leaves us asking what is the truly just distribution of happiness, and hence it cannot furnish an explanation of our notion of Justice.

Thus the answer we are seeking still seems to fly before us. Justice cannot be resolved into Equality: and though we may say that it excludes arbitrary inequality, we have yet to learn what kinds of inequality are reasonable and well grounded[1].

§ 2. Perhaps we may approximate to an answer, if we examine that part of just conduct which lies outside the range of law. Here, again, we may observe that the notion of Justice always involves distribution of something considered as advantageous or disadvantageous: whether it be money or other material means of happiness; or praise, or affection, or other immaterial good. And thus perhaps we may settle the question raised in the previous chapter (§ 3) as to the classification of the duties there discussed under the heads of Justice and Benevolence respectively. For the fulfilment of any duty of the affections, considered by itself, does not seem to exemplify Justice: but when we come to compare the obligations arising out of different affectionate relations, and to consider the right allotment of love and kind services, the notion of Justice

[1] It may be well to notice a case in which the very equality of application, which is, as has been said, implied in the mere idea of a law couched in general terms, is felt to be unjust. This is the case where the words of a statute, either from being carelessly drawn, or on account of the inevitable defects of even the most precise terminology, include (or exclude) persons and circumstances which are clearly not included in (or excluded from) the real intent and purpose of the law. In this case a particular decision, strictly in accordance with a law which generally considered is just, may cause extreme injustice: and so the difference between actual Law and Justice is sharply brought out. Still we cannot in this way obtain principles for judging generally of the justice of laws.

becomes applicable. In order to arrange this allotment properly we have to inquire what is Just. What then do we mean by a just man in matters where law-observance does not enter? It is natural to reply that we mean an impartial man, one who recognises and satisfies all claims and does not let himself be influenced by personal preferences. And no doubt this is a valuable negative criterion of the disposition of justice: if we neglect what we regard as a reasonable claim, our action cannot be just in intention. But it is obvious that this is not a sufficient criterion of just acts, any more than the negation of arbitrary inequality is a complete definition of just laws. We want to know what are reasonable claims.

Well, of these the most obvious seems to be that resulting from contract. This is to a certain extent enforced by law: but we perceive it to be just to keep engagements generally, even when there may be no legal-penalty attached to their violation. It is true that this duty is not always placed under the head of Justice: some have preferred to class it with Veracity, and it therefore seems convenient to consider it in detail separately. We may explain this ambiguity of classification in a manner similar to that in which we have just settled the boundaries of Justice and Benevolence. For when the duty of keeping a promise is viewed as absolute, out of relation to the promisee, it appears more to resemble that of Veracity: but when it is regarded as the fulfilment of a claim (which seems the more appropriate view), it falls naturally under the head of Justice.

Further, we include under the idea of binding engagements not merely verbal promises, but also what are called "implied contracts," or "tacit understandings." But this latter term is a difficult one to keep precise: and, in fact, is often used to include not only the case where *A* has in some way positively implied a pledge to *B*, but also the case where *B* has certain expectations of which *A* is aware. Here, however, the obligation is not so clear: for it seems hard to say that a man is bound to dispel all erroneous expectations that may be formed respecting his conduct, at the risk of being required to fulfil them. Still, if the expectation was natural and such as most persons would form under the circumstances, there seems to be some sort of duty to fulfil it, if it does not conflict with other

duties, though the obligation is less definite and stringent than that arising out of contract. Indeed, we may go further and state it as a third subdivision of the duties of Justice, that we ought to fulfil such expectations (of services, &c.) as arise naturally and normally out of the relations, voluntary or involuntary, in which we stand towards other human beings. And many of the duties that come under this head appear peculiarly stringent and sacred: as, for example, those that belong to the different domestic relations, discussed in the last chapter. But there we found it difficult to define even those duties that, in an indefinite form, appeared certain and indisputable: while there were others which seemed only imposed by varying and more or less arbitrary customs. Still, while these customs persist, the expectations springing from them are in a sense natural and normal, and there seems to be a kind of justice in fulfilling them. This obligation, however, cannot be regarded as clear or complete, for two reasons that were given in the last chapter: first, because customs are continually varying, and as long as any one is in a state of variation, growing or decaying, the validity of the customary claim is obviously doubtful: and secondly, because it does not seem right that an arbitrary and unreasonable custom should last for ever, and yet it can only be abolished by being "more honoured in the breach than in the observance."

But this line of reflection has landed us in a real perplexity respecting the department of duty which we are at present examining. Justice is something that we conceive to be intrinsically capable of perfectly definite determination. A scrupulously just man, we think, must be very exact and precise in his conduct: and indeed in some connexions the word "just" is used as almost synonymous with "exact" and "precise." But when we consider that part of Justice which consists in satisfying natural and customary claims, it seems impossible to estimate these claims with any exactness. The attempt to map out the region of Justice reveals to us a sort of margin or dim borderland, tenanted by expectations which are not quite claims and with regard to which we do not feel sure whether Justice does or does not bid us satisfy them. For it is in human nature to expect that what has been will be: and so

people expect that any man will do as others do in similar circumstances, and, still more, that he will continue to do whatever he has hitherto been in the habit of doing: and they think themselves wronged by his suddenly omitting the act, if the omission causes them loss or inconvenience. And sometimes claims generated in this way have legal validity: as when a right of way is established without express permission of the landowner, merely by his continued indulgence: but such customary claims extend far beyond the range of law, and are generally felt to have some sort of force. Though if a man has given no pledge to maintain a custom or habit, he may naturally think it unjust that he should be bound by the unwarranted expectations of others: and certainly their claim is quite inferior in kind to claims based on contract. Indeed it often seems as if we decided differently cases similar in all respects, except in the quantity of disappointment caused by the change. For instance, if I were to leave one tradesman and deal with another because the first had turned Quaker, no one would call it an act of injustice, though they might think me foolish. But if a rich landed proprietor in a country place were to act similarly, most persons would say that it was unjust persecution.

And we may illustrate this further by referring back again to that part of Justice which depends on law. Generally[1], we have no doubt that it is right and just to satisfy all legal claims: indeed, as we saw, this constitutes the most prominent and easily recognised element of Justice. But now, besides a definite and secure understanding that laws shall be executed until they be lawfully altered, since in ordinary times the alterations in law are very small in proportion to the amount unaltered, there is always a natural expectation that the existing laws will be maintained. And although this is, of course, an indefinite and uncertain expectation in a society like ours, where laws are continually being altered by lawful authority, it is sufficient for people in general to rely upon in arranging their concerns, investing their money, choosing their place of abode, their trade and profession, &c. And hence

[1] Whether this general rule can be stated as an absolute and unqualified first principle we shall inquire in the next chapter.

when such expectations are disappointed by a change in the law, the disappointed persons complain of injustice, and it is sometimes thought right to give them compensation. But since these expectations are of all degrees of definiteness and importance, and generally extend more widely as they decrease in value, like the ripples made by throwing a stone into a pond, it seems impossible to draw a clearly reasonable line separating valid claims from invalid, and distinguishing injustice from hardship. We seem only able to lay down as a general rule that such hardship ought to be avoided as far as possible in framing laws[1].

In this way, however, we seem to get at least one of the criteria of the justice of laws for which we were seeking. It seems to be a negative characteristic of just laws that they must not run counter to natural and normal expectations: or (as these expectations arise out of and are founded upon past experience) we may say that they must not run counter to custom and precedent. A just law, then, will be one that distributes equally benefits and burdens, except in so far as inequality of distribution is established and customary. We see, however, that this criterion cannot be applied in a perfectly definite manner. And further reflection shews it to be incomplete or imperfectly stated: for it might appear from what has been said that no old law could be unjust, as laws that have existed for a long time must create corresponding expectations. But this is contrary to Common Sense: as we are continually becoming convinced that old laws are unjust (e.g. laws establishing Slavery): indeed, this continually recurring conviction seems to be a great source of change in the laws of a progressive society.

Perhaps we may say that there are natural expectations which grow up from other elements of the social order, independent of and so possibly conflicting with laws: and that we call rules unjust which go counter to these. And this seems true, at any rate to some extent: for on this ground, e.g., primo-

[1] The difficulty of determining the validity of customary claims is well illustrated by the jural problem presented when we attempt to pass, in a country like India, from a limited to a complete tenure of land.—Cf. Maine, *Village Communities*, cc. 2 and 3.

geniture appears to many unjust, because all the landowner's children are brought up in equally luxurious habits, and share equally the paternal care and expenditure, and so the inequality of inheritance seems paradoxical and harsh. Still, we cannot explain every case in this way. For example, the conviction that slavery is unjust cannot be referred to anything in the established order of the slave-holding society, but seems to arise in a different way.

The truth is, this notion of "natural expectations" is worse than indefinite: the ambiguity of the term conceals a fundamental conflict of ideas, which appears more profound and far-reaching in its consequences the more we examine it. For the word "natural," as used in this connexion, covers and conceals the whole chasm between the actual and the ideal—what is, and what ought to be. As we have before observed[1], it commonly blends the quite distinct ideas of (1) 'that which universally exists, or almost universally, and is *normal* as opposed to exceptional,' and (2) 'that which existed originally, in the primitive state of man, and would exist now, if it had not been destroyed or overlaid by later conventions and institutions.' But it also used to signify, in more or less indefinite combination with these other meanings, 'what would exist in an ideal state of society.' And it is easy to see how these different meanings have been blended and confounded. For since by 'Nature' men have really meant God, or God viewed in a particular aspect—God, we may say, as known to us in experience —when they have come to conceive a better state of things than that which actually exists, they have not only regarded this ideal state as really exhibiting the Divine purposes more than the actual, and as being so far more "natural:" but they have gone further, and supposed more or less definitely that this ideal state of things must be what God originally created, and that the defects recognisable in what now exists must be due to the deteriorating action of men. But if we dismiss this latter view, as unsupported by historical evidence, we recognise more plainly the contrast and conflict between the other two meanings of "natural," and the corresponding incompatibility between the two elements of the common notion

[1] Book I. c. 6, § 2.

of Justice. For, from one point of view, we are disposed to think that the *customary* distribution of rights, goods, and privileges, as well as burdens and pains, is natural and just, and that this ought to be maintained by law, as it usually is: an opinion which is confirmed by (though not, I think, derived from) a consideration of the disadvantages of disturbing any tolerable social order: while, from another point of view, we seem to recognise an ideal system of rules of distribution which ought to exist, but perhaps have never yet existed, and we consider laws to be just in proportion as they conform to this ideal. It is the reconciliation between these two views which is the chief problem of practical Justice[1].

§ 3. How, then, is the ideal to be determined? This is, in fact, the question which has been haunting us from the outset of the chapter; but we could not satisfactorily discuss it until we had distinguished the two elements of the virtue of Justice, one conservative of law and custom, and the other tending to reform them. It is with this latter that we shall be henceforth concerned.

When, however, we examine this Ideal, as it seems to shew itself in the minds of different men in different ages and countries, we observe various forms of it, and what may be called various degrees of its disengagement from the Actual, which it is important to distinguish.

For, in the first place, most ordered communities suggest to the reflective mind a type or pattern of constitution to which they on the whole conform, but imperfectly: and this type may stand in the minds of some members of such a community as their sole conception of a more perfect social order. For there are many persons whose notion of "perfection," in public and private matters alike, never gets beyond that of "consistency," or what is sometimes called "logical development of principles." Thus (e.g.) a society may present a system of castes imperfectly developed, so that the lines of separation are continually transgressed and partially obliterated: and the whole aim of a social

[1] It is characteristic of an unprogressive society that in it these two points of view are indistinguishable: the Jural Ideal absolutely coincides with the Customary, and social perfection is imagined to consist in the perfect observance of a traditional system of rules.

reformer may be directed to the more perfect development of this system, by a more rigid separation of the castes. Still, when we reflect upon and compare these types, they must appear some good and some bad, or at least better and worse: while what we are now seeking is an ideal for humanity generally, deduced from some intuitive principles.

Yet again: one may conceive and plan an ideal constitution of society with many other ends in view besides the right distribution of happiness among the individuals that compose it: as (e.g.) with a view to conquest and success in war, or to the development of industry and commerce, or to the highest possible cultivation of the Arts and Sciences. But such an ideal as this we have not now to consider, as it does not appear to be constructed in conformity to our common notion of Justice. Our present question is, Are there any clear principles from which we may work out an ideally just distribution of rights and privileges, burdens and pains, among human beings as such?

But once more: when we examine the demands for, and delineations of, such a distribution which men have actually put forward, we seem to find two points of view, or (we may say) two stages of divergence from the existing modes of distribution. At one stage it is not demanded that the whole existing distribution should be altered, but only that certain Natural Rights should be conceded to all members of the community, and that Positive Law should at least embody and protect these, whatever other regulations it may contain.

Such are the Right to Personal Security; the Right to hold Property, including the right to dispose of it freely by contract: and the Right to the enforcement of free contracts generally: in particular the Right to enter into the Marriage-contract, and to satisfy the desire for Family Society. And further—since by giving a man the right to acquire Property we do not necessarily give him any property, or the means of supporting a family, or even himself: and yet this is what he naturally desires—some have added a Right to food and sustenance in exchange for labour, or (more broadly) a Right to Live: and also a Right to Education: and some, again, add Political Rights, as a Right to share in Legislation, personally

or through representatives, or in Government generally. These seem to be the chief natural rights demanded in the name of Justice: and many political idealists would be content with a constitution of society in which every individual might count upon so much as this.

Still, such a community might yet admit much inequality of distribution, accidental or customary, not founded upon reason: and thus would be condemned from a higher and more remote stage of criticism, as not an ideally just society. And this may be more easily seen if we throw the statement in another form, and say that such a society would not completely realize our notion of Divine Justice—the moral consciousness of mankind would still seem to demand a future state, in which pains and pleasures should be redistributed so as to redress the arbitrary inequalities of the present.

And further, there is much difficulty in finding clear principles upon which these Natural Rights are demanded and no others: and men do not seem to agree upon the enumeration of them: for example, there is much dispute as to the Right to Labour, and to Education, and Political Rights generally.

§ 4. There is, however, one mode of systematizing these Rights and bringing them under one principle, which has been maintained by influential thinkers, and therefore deserves careful examination. Many jurists have laid down that Freedom from interference is really the whole of what human beings, originally and apart from contracts, can be strictly said to *owe* to each other: at any rate, that the protection of this Freedom (including the enforcement of Free Contract) is the sole proper aim of Law, i.e. of those rules of mutual behaviour which are coercive and maintained by penalties. All Natural Rights, on this view, may be summed up in the Right of Freedom: so that the complete attainment of this is the complete realization of Justice; the Equality at which Justice is thought to aim being interpreted in this special sense of Equality of Freedom.

Now, I think it must be admitted that when we merely contemplate this as an abstract formula, though it is hardly an interpretation of our common notion of Justice, it yet seems to commend itself to our moral consciousness as a fundamental

principle of Ideal Law. But when we endeavour to apply it to the actual circumstances of human society, serious difficulties come into view.

In the first place, it seems needful to limit somewhat arbitrarily the extent of its application. For it involves the negative principle that no one should be coerced for his own good alone: but no one would gravely argue that this ought to be applied to the case of children, or of idiots, or insane persons. But if so, how can we know *à priori* that it ought to be applied to all sane adults? For the ground of the above-mentioned exceptions seems to be that children, &c. will manifestly be happier if they are forced to do and abstain as others think best for them: but it may be plausibly contended that this is true, though to a less degree, of the majority of mankind in the present state of their intellectual progress. Indeed, it is often conceded by the advocates of this principle that it does not hold even in respect of adults in a low stage of civilization. But if so, what criterion can be given for its application, except the utilitarian one, that it must be applied wherever human beings are sufficiently intelligent to provide for their own happiness better than others would provide for them? and thus the principle would present itself not as absolute and recognised by an independent intuition, but as a *medium axioma* of Utilitarianism.

But, again, the term Freedom is ambiguous. If we interpret it strictly, as meaning Freedom of Action alone, the principle seems to allow any amount of mutual annoyance except constraint. But obviously no one would be satisfied with such Freedom as this. If, however, we include in the idea freedom from pain and annoyance inflicted by others, the right of freedom itself seems to prevent us from accepting the principle in all its breadth. For there is scarcely any gratification of a man's natural impulses which may not cause some annoyance to others: and we cannot prohibit all such annoyances without restraining freedom of action to a degree that would be intolerable: and yet it is hard to lay down any principle for distinguishing those that ought to be allowed from those that must be prohibited, unless again we fall back upon utilitarian considerations. And in fact we find that the line actually drawn

in the positive law of different societies is always rough, varying, and disputed[1].

Thirdly, in order to render a social construction possible on this basis, we must assume that the right to Freedom includes the right to limit one's freedom by contract: and that such contracts, if they are really voluntary and not obtained by fraud or force, and if they do not violate the freedom of others, are to be enforced by legal penalties. But, in the first place, it does not seem clear that enforcement of Contracts is strictly included in the notion of realizing Freedom: for a man seems to be most completely free when no one of his volitions is allowed to have any effect in controlling any other. And, again, it may be asked whether this right of limiting Freedom is itself unlimited, and whether a man may thus freely contract himself out of freedom into slavery. For in this case the principle of freedom seems in a manner suicidal, and yet any limitation of the right of contract is hardly deducible from this principle.

This question, how far the notion of Freedom involves unlimited right to limit Freedom by free contract, becomes important again in a rather subtle manner, when we consider the relation of ideal Justice and positive law. For those who take the view of abstract Justice which we are now discussing, commonly think that the obligation to obey law (except in so far as it protects Freedom) is not absolute and independent, but depends upon a "social compact" which the individual members of each community are supposed to have made with each other. It remains to ascertain what this compact is: which, as it is at most only tacit or implied, is somewhat difficult. *Primâ facie*, it would seem that if we have entered into any compact at all with our fellow-men, it must be a compact to obey the positive law of our society, at least in so far as it has been established by the authority customarily recognised as lawful. But then, in a country where despotic government was established and traditional, the principle of abstract Freedom would lead to the justification of the most unqualified concrete tyranny: nor

[1] For example, it was held not long ago in England that the mental annoyance caused to Christians, by persons publishing their contempt for the objects of Christian worship, deserved legal punishment; but this opinion does not seem to prevail at present.

need we stop here, for even slavery might be justified in the same way: and thus our theory would end by riveting men's chains under pretence of exalting their freedom. To avoid this conclusion, it is necessary to suppose this tacit social compact to be made with still more tacit reservations: which destroys the simplicity, and therefore the plausibility, of this whole theory of political obligation.

But if it be difficult to define Freedom as an ideal to be realized in the merely personal relations of human beings, the difficulty is increased when we consider the relation of men to the material means of life and happiness.

For it is commonly thought that the right to Freedom includes the right of appropriating material things. And it is perhaps clear that the principle of non-interference secures to the present occupier the right of using such things as can only be used by one person at once. But it does not therefore follow that it gives him the right to prevent others from using at any future time anything that he has once seized: or, generally, to appropriate what he is not using, or what others may use without actually interfering with his use. Nor can it be said that a man, in appropriating a particular thing, does not interfere with the freedom of others, because the rest of the world is still open to them. For others may want just this object: and they may not be able to find anything so good at all, or at least without much labour and search: for many of the instruments and materials of comfortable living are limited in quantity. And in respect of property in land, there is a further difficulty in defining occupation: for land may be occupied in various modes and degrees; and it may be disputed whether a man who hunts over land has a natural right to prevent its being used for pasturage[1], and whether a shepherd has such a right against one who wishes to till it, and whether one who is using the surface has such a right to the minerals it may contain. And again, it is disputed whether the right of Property, as thus derived, is to include the right of controlling the disposal of one's possessions after death. For this to most

[1] It has been urged as a justification for expropriating savages from the land of new colonies that tribes of hunters have really no moral right to property in the soil over which they hunt.

persons seems naturally bound up with ownership: yet it is absurd to say that we interfere with a man's free agency by anything that we may do after death to what he owned during his life: and many jurists have treated this right as purely conventional and not therefore included in "natural law."

Other difficulties might be raised: but we need not pursue them, for if Freedom be taken simply to mean that one man's actions are to be as little as possible restrained by others, it is obviously more fully realized without appropriation. And if it be said that it includes, besides this, facility and security in the gratification of desires, and that it is Freedom in this sense that we think should be equally distributed, and that this cannot be realized without appropriation; then it may be replied, that in a society where nearly all material things are already appropriated, this kind of Freedom is not and cannot be equally distributed. A man born into such a society, without inheritance, is not only far less free than those who possess property, but he is less free than if there had been no appropriation. He is free to walk along the roads, to pluck heather on the mountain sides, and to drink of the rivers, when they do not run through private grounds: but what is this worth? It may be said that, having freedom of contract, he will give his services in exchange for the means of satisfying his wants. And a brilliant essayist[1] has attempted to shew that this exchange must necessarily give him more than he could have got if he had been placed in the world by himself: that, in fact, society by existing makes the earth more capable of affording gratification to each and all of the after-born individuals than it would otherwise be. But, at the most, this does not prove that society, by appropriation, does not interfere with the natural freedom of individuals: but only that it compensates them for such interference, and that the compensation is adequate. However, even this, though it may be true as a general rule, is obviously not so in all cases: as men are sometimes unable to sell their services at all, and often can only obtain in exchange for them an insufficient subsistence. And certainly any *equality* in the distribution of Freedom (in the sense of liberty to gratify desires) is prevented by the institution of property.

[1] Bastiat.

§ 5. It seems, then, that though Freedom is an object of keen and general desire, and both directly an important element of happiness, and indirectly from the satisfaction of natural impulses which it allows, the attempt to make it the fundamental notion of theoretical Jurisprudence is attended with insuperable difficulties: and even the Natural Rights which it claims to cover (which do not include all that have been demanded as natural) cannot be brought under it except in a very forced and arbitrary manner[1]. But further, as was before hinted, an equal distribution of Freedom does not seem to exhaust our notion of Justice. For Ideal Justice seems to demand that other things should be distributed equally besides Freedom, or at least justly (if Justice be not identical with Equality, but merely exclusive of arbitrary inequality).

How, then, shall we find the principle of this highest and most comprehensive ideal?

We shall be led to it, I think, by referring again to one of the grounds of obligation to render services, which was noticed in the last chapter: the claim of Gratitude. It there appeared that we have not only a natural impulse to requite benefits, but also a conviction that such requital is a duty, and its omission blameworthy, to some extent at least: though we found it difficult to define the extent. Now it seems that when we, so to say, *universalize* this impulse and conviction, we get the element in the disposition and intuition of Justice, which we are now trying to define. For if we take the proposition "that good done to any individual ought to be requited by him," and leave out the relation to the individual in either term of the proposition, we seem to have an equally strong conviction of the truth of the more general statement "that good deeds ought to be requited[2]." And if we take into consideration

[1] The further consideration of Political Freedom, with which we shall be occupied in the next chapter, will afford additional illustrations of the difficulties involved in the notion.

[2] If the view given in the text be sound, it illustrates very strikingly the difference between natural instincts and moral intuitions. For the impulse to requite a service is, on its emotional side, quite different from that which prompts us to claim the fruits of our labour, or "a fair day's wages for a fair day's work." Still, our apprehension of the *duty* of Gratitude seems capable of being subsumed under the more general intuition "that desert ought to be requited."

all the different kinds and degrees of services, upon the mutual exchange of which society is based, we get the proposition "that men ought to be rewarded in proportion to their deserts." And this we should perhaps agree to be the true and simple principle of distribution in any case where there are no claims arising from Contract or Custom to modify its operation.

For example, this seems obviously to be the principle on which the profits of any work or enterprise should be divided among those who have contributed to its success: if there has been no previous arrangement as to their division. And it may be observed, that some thinkers maintain the proposition discussed in the previous section—that Law ought to aim at securing the greatest possible Freedom for each individual—not as absolute and axiomatic, but as derivative from the principle that we are now examining: on the ground that the best way of providing that Desert shall be Requited is to leave men as free as possible to exert themselves for the satisfaction of their own desires, and so to win each his own requital. "Justice," says Mr Spencer, "demands equal Freedom, in order that benefit gained may be in proportion to faculty put forth." And similarly this seems to be really the principle upon which the Right of Property is rested, when it is justified by the proposition that "every one has an exclusive right to the produce of his labour." For on reflection it is seen that no labour really "produces" any material thing, but only adds to its value: and we do not think that a man can acquire a right to a material thing belonging to another, by spending his labour on it—even if he does so in the *bonâ fide* belief that it is his own property—but only to adequate *compensation* for his labour: and this is what the proposition must mean. Or, if it be stretched to explain the original right of property in materials, as being in a sense "produced" (i.e. found) by their first discoverer[1], reflection again shews that

[1] It certainly requires a considerable strain to bring the "right of First Discovery" under the notion of "right to the produce of one's labour." Hence Locke and others have found it necessary to suppose, as the ultimate justification of the former right, a "tacit consent" of mankind in general that all things previously unappropriated shall belong to the first appropriator. But this, as we have seen, is a rather desperate device of ethico-political construction: on account of the fatal facility with which it may be used to justify almost any arbitrariness in positive law.

we do not grant this (as a *moral* right) absolutely, but only in so far as it appears to us not more than adequate compensation for the discoverer's trouble. For example, we should not consider that the first finder of a large uninhabited region had a moral right to appropriate the whole of it. Hence this justification of the right of property refers us ultimately to the principle "that every man ought to receive adequate requital for his well-directed labour." So, again, when we speak of the world as justly governed by God, we seem to mean that, if we could know the whole of human existence, we should find that happiness is distributed among men according to their deserts. And Divine Justice is thought to be a pattern which Human Justice is to imitate as far as the conditions of human society allow.

This kind of Justice, as has been said, seems like Gratitude universalized: and the same principle applied to punishment may similarly be regarded as Resentment universalized; though the parallel is incomplete, if we are considering the present state of our moral conceptions. History shews us a time in which it was thought not only as natural, but as clearly right and incumbent on a man, to requite injuries as to repay benefits: but in the outset of moral reflection in Europe this notion was repudiated, and Socrates and Plato taught that it could never be right really to harm any one, however he may have harmed us. And this is the accepted doctrine in Christian societies, as regards individual Resentment. But in its universalized form the old conviction seems still to remain in the intuitional view of Criminal Justice. For the view that punishment should be merely deterrent and reformatory is distinctively utilitarian; and Common Sense seems to hold that a man who has done wrong ought to suffer pain in return (even if no benefit result either to him or to others from the pain), and that Justice requires this; although the individual wronged ought not to seek or desire to inflict the pain.

This, then, is one element of what Aristotle calls Corrective Justice, which is embodied in criminal law. It must not be confounded with the principle of Reparation, on which legal awards of damages are based. We have already noticed this as a simple deduction from the maxim of general Benevolence,

which forbids us to do harm to our fellow-creatures: for if we have harmed them, we can yet approximately obey the maxim by giving compensation for the harm. Though here the question arises whether we ought to make reparation for harm that has been quite involuntarily caused: and it is not easy to answer it decisively. For to some it seems that one ought only to pay damages when one has been in fault: but others think that we ought to allow no one to suffer through our agency, if this can be prevented without violating other duties: and hence that we ought to endeavour to make compensation for all harm, voluntary or involuntary, of which we have been the physical cause. Common Sense does not seem clear on this point: and even if we could settle it without hesitation, there would still remain some difficulty, as we shall see presently, in defining the limits of the Voluntary[1].

Between the principle of Reparative and that of Retributive Justice, there is no danger of confusion or collision, as one is concerned with the injured party, and the other with the wrongdoer. In the actual administration of Law they may sometimes present themselves as alternatives: but so far as this is the case actual Law is seen to fall short of ideal Justice, and therefore does not come under our consideration here: but when we turn again to the other branch of Retributive Justice, which is concerned with the reward of services, we find another notion, Fitness, often blended indistinguishably with Desert proper, and so needing to be carefully separated from it: and when the distinction has been made, we see that the two are liable to come into collision. I do not feel sure that what I mean by Fitness belongs, strictly speaking, to the analysis of Justice: but it certainly enters into our common conception of the ideal or perfectly rational order of society, as regards the distribution both of instruments and functions, and (to some extent at least) of other sources of happiness. We

[1] There is often a further difficulty in ascertaining the amount of compensation due: for this frequently involves a comparison of things essentially disparite, and there are some kinds of harm which it seems impossible to compensate. Still, the principle, that we ought to balance any unhappiness that we may have caused to another by causing him an equal amount of happiness, seems clear: and the difficulties of carrying it into execution appear to resolve themselves into those which we have already encountered in Book II.

certainly think it reasonable and right that instruments should be given to those who can use them best, and functions allotted to those who are most competent to perform them: but these may not be those who have rendered most services in the past: and yet, if the functions are interesting and delightful in themselves, or such as are normally and properly attended with dignity and splendour of life, fame, material comfort and freedom from sordid cares, &c., it is natural to regard them as prizes to be given to those whose good deeds have deserved them most. And again, we think it reasonable that particular material means of enjoyment should fall to the lot of those who are susceptible of the respective kinds of pleasure; as no one would think of allotting pictures to a blind man, or rare wines to one who had no taste. Thus the notions of Desert and Fitness appear at least occasionally conflicting: but perhaps, as I have said, Fitness should rather be regarded as a utilitarian principle of distribution, inevitably limiting the realisation of what is abstractly just, than as a part of the interpretation of Justice proper: and it is with the latter that we are at present concerned. At any rate, it is the Requital of Desert that constitutes the chief element of Ideal Justice, in so far as this is something more than mere Equality and Impartiality. Let us then examine more closely wherein Desert consists: and we will begin with Good Desert, as being of the most fundamental and permanent importance: for we may hope that crime and its punishment will decrease and gradually disappear as the world improves, but the right or best distribution of the means of happiness is an object that we must always be striving to realize.

§ 6. And first, the question which we had to consider in defining Gratitude again recurs: whether, namely, we are to apportion the reward to the effort made, or to the results attained. For it may be said that the actual utility of any service must depend much upon favourable circumstances and fortunate accidents, not due to any desert of the agent: or again, may be due to powers and skills which were connate, or have been developed by favourable conditions of life, or by good education, and why should we reward him for these? (for the latter we ought rather to reward those who have

educated him). And certainly it is only in so far as *moral* excellences are exhibited in human achievements that they are commonly thought to be such as God will reward. But by drawing this line we do not yet get rid of the difficulty. For it may still be said that good actions are due entirely, or to a great extent, to good dispositions and habits, and that these are partly inherited and partly due to the care of parents and teachers: so that in rewarding these we are rewarding the results of natural and accidental advantages, and it is unreasonable to distinguish these from others, such as skill and knowledge, and to say that it is even ideally just to reward the former and not the latter. Shall we say, then, that the reward should be proportionate to the amount of voluntary effort for a good end? But Necessarians will say that even this is ultimately the effect of causes extraneous to the man's self. On the necessarian view, then, it would seem to be ideally just that all men should enjoy equal amounts of happiness: for there seems to be no justice in first making *A* better than *B*, and then, on that account, making him happier. But why should we not, instead of "all men," say "all sentient beings"? for why should man have more happiness than any other animal? But thus the pursuit of ideal justice seems to conduct us to such a precipice of paradox that Common Sense is likely to abandon it. At any rate the idea of Desert has thus altogether vanished. And as this is an essential element of the common notion of Justice, we seem to be led to the conclusion which I anticipated in Bk. I. c. 5: that in this one department of our moral consciousness the idea of Free Will seems indispensable in a quite exceptional manner to the morality of Common Sense, and we cannot without it make the common conception of right conduct at once rational and definite. However, perhaps it would be superfluous to discuss this further[1]. For in any case we cannot practically separate

[1] Perhaps we may partly attribute to the difficulties above discussed, that the notion of Desert has sometimes dropped out of the ideal of Utopian reconstructors of society, and 'Equality of Happiness' has seemed to be the only end. Justice, it has been thought, prescribes simply that each should have an equal share of happiness, as far as happiness depends on the action of others. But there seems to be much difficulty in working this out: for (apart from the considerations of Fitness above mentioned) equal happiness is not

that part of a man's achievement which is due strictly to his free volition from that part which is due to the original gift of nature and to favouring circumstances. No doubt, it would be possible to remove, to some extent, the inequalities that are attributable to circumstances, by bringing the best education within the reach of all classes, so that all children might have an equal opportunity of being selected and trained for any functions for which they seemed to be fit. And this certainly seems to be prescribed by ideal justice, in so far as it removes or mitigates arbitrary inequality: and accordingly in those ideal reconstructions of society, in which we may expect to find men's notions of abstract justice exhibited, such an institution as this has generally found a place. Still, there will be much natural inequality which we cannot remove or even estimate: so that we must necessarily leave to Providence the realization of what we conceive as the ideal of Justice, and content ourselves with rewarding in proportion to the service actually rendered (that is, if *intentionally* rendered; for otherwise no one would think it deserving of reward). And we commonly restrict the scope of Human Justice still further, by confining it to the requital of services in proportion to their *utility:* for, according to the Intuitional view, there is a difference between the usefulness of actions and their goodness as measured by a true moral standard: in so far, then, as actions are good but not useful, we commonly think that they must be left to God to requite—or perhaps that "virtue is its own reward"—at any rate that man must only try to reward services in proportion to their utility.

It remains to determine the comparative value of different services. Here, on first reflection, Common Sense seems to offer us an intuitive standard of value: for we continually speak of the "fair" or "proper" price of any kind of services as something generally known, and we condemn the demand

to be attained by equal distribution of objects of desire. For some require more and some less to be equally happy. Hence, it seems, we must take differences of *needs* into consideration. But if mental as well as corporeal needs are included (as seems reasonable) we should have to give less to cheerful, contented, self-sacrificing people than to the selfish, discontented, and grasping, as the former can be made happy with less. And this is too paradoxical to be recommended.

for more than this as extortionate or unjust. However, when we look closer, we find that the "fair" in such cases is ascertained by a reference to analogy and custom, and that any service is considered to be "fairly worth" what is usually given for services of the kind. Hence this element of the notion of Justice may seem, after all, to resolve itself into that discussed in § 2. But probably no one would now maintain in its full breadth this identification of the Just with the Usual price of services: and indeed such judgments as those just mentioned seem, for the most part, to be merely inadvertent, and to ignore the mode in which prices are actually determined, —at least in the more civilized communities: for in some states of society it certainly appears that the payment to be given for services is as completely fixed by usage as any other customary duty, so that it would be a clear disappointment of normal expectation to deviate from this usage. But in more progressive countries it is determined more and more by free competition: and so the market value rises and falls, and is different at different places and times: and no properly instructed person can expect any fixity in it, or complain of "unfairness" in any deviation from it.

Can we then say that "market value" (as determined by free competition) corresponds to our notion of what is ideally just?

This is a question of much interest, because this is obviously the mode of determining the remuneration of services that would be universal in a society constructed on the principle previously discussed, of securing the greatest possible Freedom of Action (only limited by Free Contract) to all members of the community. It should be observed that this, which we may call the Individualistic Ideal, is the type to which modern civilized communities have long been tending to approximate: and it is therefore very important to know whether it is one which completely satisfies the demands of morality: and whether Freedom, if not an absolute end or First Principle of abstract Justice, is still to be sought as the best means to the realization of a just social order by the general requital of Desert.

At first sight it seems plausible to urge that the "market

value" represents the estimate set upon anything by mankind generally, and therefore gives us exactly that "common-sense" judgment respecting value which we are now trying to find. But on examination we perceive that the market price of different services does not usually depend on their comparative worth in any one's estimation, but upon the ease or difficulty of procuring them—as the plutologists say, "on the relation between the supply of services and the demand for them"—and it does not seem that any one's Desert can properly be lessened merely by the increased number or willingness of others rendering the same services. Nor, again, does it seem that it can be decreased by his own willingness, for it is strange to reward a man less because he is zealous and eager in the performance of his function: yet in bargaining the less willing always has the advantage. Then again, one man's reward may be more than another's, not because his service is more valuable, but because it is rendered to those who can pay lavishly: thus, e.g., those who minister to the pleasures of the rich are often thought to be over-paid. And it may be added that the majority of men seem unfit to decide on the value of many important services, from imperfect knowledge of their nature and effects: so that, as far as these are concerned, the true judgment will not be represented in the market-place. Then, again, there are highly important services which are not of immediate utility, as scientific discoveries. These may ultimately produce immense fruit, but perhaps not in the lifetime of the discoverer: so that as rendered by him they have no market value.

But even in the case of services generally marketable, and where the bargain is made with perfect commercial acuteness on both sides, we still do not find that a "free" contract corresponds to our common notion of a "just" or "fair" contract, unless the contracting parties are on a tolerably equal footing. If I see a rich man drowning with no one near, I may bargain to save him at the price of all his wealth; but we should not call this just, or at any rate fair and equitable[1].

[1] It is to be observed that we sometimes restrict Justice, in contrast with Fairness or Equity, to the observance of contracts and other definite claims: though we also and more commonly use it as convertible with these latter terms, and in an ethical treatise it seems best to take it in this wider meaning.

And this is only an extreme case of what is continually going on in the present state of society. *A* is continually enabled by *B*'s necessities to squeeze out of him a "free" contract in which he gets a most unequal share of the common gain. Nor does it seem that a closer approximation to the Individualistic Ideal is likely to reduce these inequalities of social situation. And any organized attempt to remove them—for example, as was before suggested, by a complete system of free education—would in the first place involve a considerable interference with Freedom, and would, after all, attain the desired result in a very imperfect manner.

These reasons (especially the two first mentioned) have led some political thinkers to hold that Justice requires an entirely different mode of distributing payment for services from that at present effected by free competition: and that all labourers ought to be paid according to the intrinsic value of their labour as estimated by enlightened and competent judges. And certainly this (which we may perhaps call the Socialistic Ideal) appears a nearer approximation to what we conceive as Divine Justice than the present state of society affords. But this supposes that we have found the rational method of determining value: which, however, is still to seek. Shall we say that these judges are to take the value of a service as proportionate to the amount of happiness produced by it? Here, we are, of course, met in the first place by all the difficulties of comparing different kinds of happiness (and happinesses of different persons) discussed in Book II. But supposing these can be overcome, it is still hard to say how we are to compare the value of different services that must necessarily be combined to produce happy life. For example, how shall we compare the respective values of necessaries and luxuries? for we may be more sensible of the enjoyment derived from the latter, but we could not have this at all without the former. And, again, when different kinds of labour cooperate in the same production, how are we to estimate their relative values? for perhaps all mere unskilled labour may be brought to a common standard, but this seems almost impossible in the case of different kinds of skill. For how shall we compare the labour of design with that of achievement? or the supervision of the whole with the execution of

details? or the labour of actually producing with that of educating producers? or the service of the *savant* who discovers a new principle, with that of the inventor who applies it?

It seems, in short, that there are almost insuperable theoretical[1] difficulties in the way of the construction of an ideally just social order, in which all services are rewarded in exact proportion to their intrinsic value. And, more generally, we seem forced to conclude that it is impossible to obtain clear premises for a reasoned method of determining exactly different amounts of Good Desert. And, perhaps, Common Sense scarcely holds such a method to be possible: for though it considers Ideal Justice to consist in rewarding Desert, it regards any attempt to realize this ideal in the general distribution of the means of happiness as Utopian. In the actual state of society it is only within a very limited range that any endeavour is made to reward Good Desert. Parents attempt this to some extent in dealing with their children, and the State in rewarding remarkable public services rendered by statesmen, soldiers, &c.: but reflection on these cases will shew how very rough and imperfect a standard is used in deciding the amount due. And ordinarily the only kind of Justice which we try to realize is that which consists in the fulfilment of contracts and definite expectations: leaving the general fairness of Distribution by Bargaining to take care of itself.

§ 7. When we pass to consider the case of Criminal Justice, we find, in the first place, difficulties corresponding to those which we have already noticed, although in a less degree. We find, to begin, a similar implication and partial confusion of the ideas of Law and Justice. For, as was said, by "bringing a man to Justice," we commonly mean "inflicting legal punishment" on him: and we think it right that neither more nor less than the penalty inflicted by law should be executed, although we often condemn the legal scale of punishment as unjust. At the same time, we have no such perplexity in respect of changes in the law as occurs in the case of Civil Justice: for we do not think that a man can acquire, by custom, prescriptive rights to over-lenient punishment, as he is thought

[1] It is not perhaps necessary that I should here enlarge on the *practical* obstacles in the way of any attempt to realize such an ideal system.

to do to an unequal distribution of liberties and privileges. If, again, we investigate the ideal of Criminal Justice, as intuitively determined, we find the principle of Desert more thoroughly accepted by Common Sense than in the former case: for in so far as punishment is not merely deterrent (as it is on the Utilitarian view), it is commonly thought that it ought to be proportioned to the gravity of crime[1]. Still, when we endeavour to make the method of apportionment perfectly rational and precise, the difficulties seem at least as great as in the case of Good Desert. For, first, the assumption of Free Will seems necessarily to come in here also: since if a man's bad deeds are entirely caused by nature and circumstances, it certainly appears, as Robert Owen urged, that he does not properly deserve to be punished for them: we should rather devote our efforts to altering the conditions under which he acts (of course the prospect of punishment is one of these conditions, and it will not do to remove that, in so far as it prevents him from doing harm: but then it is retained on different grounds). And we certainly think that offences committed by persons who have had no moral training, or a perverted training, are really less criminal, and deserve less punishment—at any rate at God's hands: for perhaps men cannot take this into account, and must punish a man for any evil which he has intended to do, and from which nothing prevented him from abstaining except absence of sufficient motive. Still the consciousness of this seems to render the penal arrangements of society imperfectly satisfying to our sense of Justice. And we actually do punish deliberate offences more than impulsive, apparently as implying a more free choice of evil. And the presence of any very powerful motive, in itself natural and innocent, seems to us to lessen the essential criminality of an act, as when a man steals food to escape starvation. And, still more, if the motive be even laudable, as when a man kills a villain whose crimes elude legal punishment, or heads a hopeless rebellion for the good of his country. In such cases

[1] Of course those who hold that the essence of Justice consists in securing external Freedom among the members of a community, and that punishment is only justified as a means to this end, naturally think that in awarding punishment we ought to consider merely its efficacy as such means. But this can scarcely be put forward as an interpretation of the common notion of Just Punishment.

we commonly think that punishment ought to be mitigated: though in a vague and vacillating way, as we cannot estimate accurately the diminution of ill desert.

But even if we neglect the motive, and take the intention only into account, it is not easy to state clear principles for determining the gravity of crimes. If it be said that punishment ought to be in proportion to the "harm" intended, we require further to know what is meant by harm. For if we could take it to mean "unhappiness" there would remain only such doubts and obscurities as were found to beset the Hedonistic method (cf. Book II.). But then we should be in conflict with Common Sense: for in many cases the criminal, though he knows that he is doing wrong, does not intend to produce any unhappiness at all: as when a thief takes what he thinks will not be missed. Indeed, in such cases as those of the starving man, or the patriotic rebel, the intention of the criminal is clearly to produce happiness. Again, we do not commonly think that a crime is rendered less grave, by being kept perfectly secret: and yet a great part of the harm done by a crime is the "secondary evil" (as Bentham calls it) of the alarm and insecurity which it causes: and this part is cut off by complete secresy. It may be replied that this latter difficulty is not a practical one: because we are not called upon to punish a crime until it has been discovered, and then the secondary evil has been caused, and is all the greater because of the previous secresy. But it remains true that it was not designed for discovery: and therefore that this part of the evil caused by the crime was not intended by the criminal. And if we say that the heinousness of the crime depends on the loss of happiness that would generally be caused by such acts if they were allowed to go unpunished, and that we must suppose the criminal to be aware of this: we seem to be endeavouring to force a utilitarian theory into an intuitional form by means of a legal fiction.

We have hitherto spoken of intentional wrong-doing: but the Law awards punishment also for harm that is due to rashness or negligence: and the justification of this involves us in further difficulties. Some jurists seem to regard rashness and negligence as positive states of mind, in which the agent

consciously refuses the attention or reflection which he knows he ought to give: and no doubt this sort of wilful recklessness does sometimes occur and seems as properly punishable as if the resulting harm had been positively intended. But the law does not require evidence that this was the agent's state of mind (which indeed in most cases it would be impossible to give): but is content with proof that the harm might have been prevented by such care as an average man would have shewn under the circumstances. And most commonly by "carelessness" we simply mean a purely negative psychological fact, i.e. that the agent did not perform certain processes of observation or reflection: it is therefore at the time strictly involuntary, and so scarcely seems to be justly punishable. It may be said perhaps that though the present carelessness is not blameworthy, the past neglect to cultivate habits of care is so. But in many individual instances we cannot reasonably infer even this past neglect: and in such cases the utilitarian theory of punishment, which regards it as a means of preventing similar harmful acts in the future, seems alone applicable[1].

The results of this examination of Justice may be summed up as follows. The prominent element in Justice as ordinarily conceived is a kind of Equality: that is, Impartiality in the observance or enforcement of certain general rules allotting good or evil to individuals. But when we have clearly distinguished this element, we see that the definition of the virtue required for practical guidance is left obviously incomplete. Inquiring further for the right general principles of distribution, we find that our common notion of Justice includes—besides the principle of Reparation for injury—two quite distinct and divergent elements. The one, which we may call Conservative Justice is realized (1) in the observance of Law and Contracts and definite understandings, and in the enforcement of such penalties for the violation of these as have been properly announced and generally accepted: and (2) in the fulfilment of natural and normal expectations. This latter obligation, however, is of a somewhat indefinite kind. But the other element, which

[1] We have before noticed that similar difficulties arise in determining the limits within which Reparation is due; that is, on the view that it is only incumbent on us to make compensation for voluntary harm.

we have called Ideal Justice, is still more difficult to define: for there seem to be two quite distinct conceptions of it, embodied respectively in what we have called the Individualistic and the Socialistic Ideals of a political community. The first of these takes the realization of Freedom as the ultimate end and standard of right social relations: but on examining it closer we find that the notion of Freedom will not give a practicable basis for social construction without certain arbitrary definitions and limitations: and even if we admit these, still a society in which Freedom is realized as far as is feasible does not completely suit our sense of Justice. *Primâ facie*, this is more satisfied by the Socialistic Ideal of Distribution, founded on the principle of requiting Desert: but when we try to make this principle precise, we find ourselves again involved in grave difficulties: and similar perplexities beset the development of Criminal Justice on the same principle.

Ideal Justice, therefore, is very difficult to delineate, even in outline: for if we cannot work out satisfactorily either of these two conceptions, it is still harder to make a satisfactory combination of the two; and yet difficult altogether to discard either. And we are farther perplexed when we try to reconcile either with Conservative Justice. For both in public and in private affairs it is often questioned how far the natural expectations of comparatively undeserving persons ought to interfere with Distribution according to Desert: and, again, how far such expectations, if not founded on definite contract, ought to hamper the Freedom of others. To such questions our attempt to define the common-sense notion of Justice does not seem to furnish an answer.

CHAPTER VI.

LAWS AND PROMISES.

§ 1. In the discussion of Justice the moral obligations of obedience to Law and observance of Contract have been included, and have, indeed, appeared to be the most definite part of the complex system of duties commonly denoted by the term. At the same time the first obligation is sometimes put forward as an independent principle. And, in fact, as we have seen, there are some laws, the violation of which does not interfere with the rights of others, and therefore has not the characteristics of an act of Injustice. Again, the duty of Fidelity to promises is also commonly considered as absolute, independently of any injury done to the promisee by breaking it: for (e. g.) men think that a promise to the dead (who are beyond the reach of injury) ought to be kept: indeed, some would regard it as even more sacred than a promise made to the living. It is therefore incumbent on us to examine how far the principles "that Law ought to be obeyed" and "that promises ought to kept," seem to be truths underivative, self-evident, and capable of clear application.

To begin with the former duty, which has been called the duty of Order. We have first to ascertain what the Law is which we are evidently bound to obey. It is plain that we cannot here distinguish Legal from other rules by considering the sanctions actually attached to them, as we had occasion to do in a previous chapter[1]. For commands may be issued by rebels and usurpers which we are morally bound to resist, though we may have to dread judicial penalties for disobedi-

[1] Cf. *ante*, Bk. II. c. 5, § 2.

ence. Shall we say then, as was proposed in Book I. c. 2, that Laws are those rules which *ought* to be enforced by a definitely organized infliction of punishments? This certainly seems to be the definition most suitable for distinguishing theoretical Jurisprudence from Ethics proper: but it fails to indicate the special object and scope of the moral duty which we are now examining. For we think that, generally speaking, positive laws ought to be observed, even when they are such as a theoretical jurist would condemn: and it is only because there are such laws, that Law-observance has to be constituted a special department of duty: for the rules that we deduce from the principles of abstract Jurisprudence as proper to be enforced in any community, are always such as a moral man ought to observe, whether they are enforced or not. Hence it seems that for our present purpose we must define Laws to be Rules of Conduct which we are morally bound to obey, not solely on account of their intrinsic rightness, but on account of the source from which they are derived: or, more briefly, Commands[1] imposed by Rightful Authority. Of course it may sometimes be not only our interest but our duty to obey rules imposed by persons who have usurped authority to which they have no right. But this, all would agree, is solely in order to avoid the greater evils which might result to ourselves and others from our disobedience: and the extent of such a duty must be determined by considerations of expediency only, as in fact it is only a particular application of the more general duties of Prudence and Benevolence.

This rightful authority is commonly conceived to reside in some living men. No doubt in some societies, at some stages of their development, the whole or a part of the code of laws habitually observed, or at least recognised as binding, has been believed to be of divine or semi-divine institution; or perhaps from mere antiquity to possess a sanctity superior to that of any living authority; so that such laws are of right unalterable. But we do not find this view in the Common Sense of civilized Europe, upon which we are now reflecting. In our societies there is not thought to be any portion of law which, in virtue

[1] The distinction between Laws proper and special ordinances is not here important.

of its origin, is beyond the reach of alteration by any living authority.

What kind of authority, then, does Common Sense regard as legitimate?

It can hardly be said that there is any clear answer to be found to this question. For here the conflict between the Ideal and the Traditional or Customary, which has perplexed us in seeking the definition of Justice, meets us again in an even more complicated form. For not only do some say that obedience is always due to the established authority in any country, while others maintain that an authority constituted in a particular way is essentially legitimate, and that a nation has a right to claim that such an authority shall be established, even at the risk of civil strife and bloodshed: but often, too, the authority actually established is not even traditionally legitimate. So that we have sometimes to distinguish *three* claims to authority: (1) that of the Government held to be ideally or abstractly right, and such as ought to be established: (2) that of the Government *de jure*, according to the constitutional traditions in any given country: and (3) that of the *de facto* Government. And, again, the attempt to define each of these claims, taken alone, involves us in considerable perplexity and disagreement, as a closer examination will shew.

§ 2. It will be convenient to begin by considering the Ideal. Here I do not propose to consider all views as to the right constitution of supreme authority which speculative thinkers have put forward: but only such as have a *primâ facie* claim to express the Common Sense of mankind on the subject. Of these the most important, and the most widely urged and admitted, is the principle that the Sovereign in any community can only be rightfully constituted by the Consent of the Subjects. This, as was noticed in the preceding chapter, represents the Individualistic Ideal of Society in the sphere of constitutional law. For if no one originally owes anything to another except non-interference, he clearly can only be placed in the relation of Subject to Sovereign by his own consent. And thus, in order to reconcile the original right of Freedom with the actual duty of Law-observance, the famous hypothesis of the Social Contract

appears necessary. We must observe that on this view the absolute and underivative character of the obligation that we are now examining is abandoned: as Obedience to Law becomes merely a special application of the duty of keeping contracts. We shall return to this hereafter: but first we have to examine the theory of the Social Contract itself with some care, as it is a highly versatile doctrine, and leads to very various results in different hands.

In the first place, it was once put forward as a historical hypothesis: it was supposed that the transition from the "national" to the "political" state actually took place by means of a Contract, which (if we could only ascertain its terms) conferred indelible legitimacy on some particular form of social organization. This view, however, seems to be now so universally abandoned, that we may dispense ourselves from considering it further. But apart from this historical fiction, the theory of a Social Compact may be employed in several different ways. As used by some thinkers, it has a merely formal effect: merely giving a new point of view from which the duty of obeying the traditional and customary authority in any society may be regarded. In this case it is thought that a man by remaining in a country enters into a "tacit understanding" to obey the laws laid down by the authority generally recognised as lawful in the country. It is still a question what the conditions of the contract are, and under what circumstances it may be considered void. Some have maintained that—since the understanding is that the law should protect the individual's life and liberty—if he is unjustly menaced with death, imprisonment, &c., at the hands of the authorities, the compact is annulled, and he is no longer morally bound to submission. Socrates, however, in a well-known dialogue of Plato[1], is represented as taking the opposite view. The extreme indefiniteness of an "implied understanding" seems to render it impossible to argue conclusively for either doctrine.

Some, again, limit the contract in another way, holding that certain "Natural Rights" are inalienable, and that a man cannot be bound to submit to laws which deprive him of these. But as to the exact nature of these rights there are several

[1] *Crito.*

different opinions, leading to different views of the essential legitimacy of positive laws and constitutions. For of those who would agree that all such rights may be summed up in the notion of Freedom, some would mean only civil Freedom: i.e. that no one was bound to submit to slavery, however much it might be established by law. But (2) it is easy to pass from civil to constitutional freedom: for, as we saw in the last chapter, the Right to one's own property is commonly included in the former notion: but all taxation is a forcible interference with property: hence it has been held that a man has a natural right to refuse to pay any tax to which he has not actually consented personally or by his representatives, and that rebellion upon this ground is justifiable. But, again, (3) we may go further and hold that no man ought to be compelled to submit to laws of any kind to which he has not similarly assented; and some would say that this is the only binding social contract, and that members of any society have a right to demand that they should be governed by no laws except those thus made, and to refuse obedience to other laws if this seems expedient. And thus, when we apply this principle to large communities, we are led to what is known as Representative Government as the only one whose authority seems on abstract principles valid. This, in fact, is the form which the Individualistic Ideal has usually taken in its application to Politics: but it seems open to some of the objections previously urged against the general theory of Freedom as an absolute End, and also to others peculiar to this part of the subject. For, in the first place, if the principle be absolute, it ought to apply to all human beings alike: but it would be absurd not to exclude children, and yet we cannot do this without drawing an arbitrary line: and some would think it desirable to exclude women also. But, again, we must admit that the theory is very imperfectly realized (even as regards the male adults to whom its application has commonly been restricted) by the Representative System of Government as at present carried out or even commonly conceived. For a Representative assembly is chosen only by a part of the nation, and each law is approved only by a part of the assembly: and it can hardly be said that one has assented to a law passed by

a mere majority of an assembly against one member of which one has voted. In truth, it seems impossible to carry out this view of the social contract compatibly with the present appropriation of the earth's surface by communities, not only for their exclusive use and enjoyment, but also for exclusive legislation within certain territorial limits. For, on this theory, individuals ought to have a right of withdrawing when laws are passed of which they do not approve, without being forced to sell their land—for how can any one else have a right to take their land from them? It may be said that this would be too inconvenient: but if the principle will not hold for an extreme case, it must not be stated as absolute and independent. Otherwise, it seems that if constitutional Freedom is realized when the will of the majority prevails, constitutional and civil Freedom may come into irreconcileable conflict. For, as Mill and others have urged, the majority of a nation may be as tyrannical as any despot, and may encroach to any extent on the freedom of action of individuals.

But, again, the principle that the laws of any community ought to express the will of the majority of its members seems *primâ facie* incompatible with the view so vigorously maintained by Socrates and his most famous disciples, that laws ought to be made by people who understand law-making. For though the majority of a representative assembly in a particular country at a particular time may be more fit to make laws for their country than any set of experts otherwise selected, we certainly cannot tell *à priori* that this will be universally the case. Yet surely the Socratic proposition (which is merely a special application of the principle noticed in the latter part of the preceding chapter, "that functions should be allotted to the fittest") has as much claim to be considered a primary intuition as the one we have been discussing. Indeed, the secular controversy between Aristocracy and Democracy seems ultimately reducible to a conflict between those two principles: a conflict of which it is impossible to find a solution, so long as the argument remains in the *à priori* region.

§ 3. However, to discuss this exhaustively would carry us too far beyond the range of Ethics proper: but we may perhaps conclude that it is impossible to elicit from Common Sense any

clear and certain intuitions as to the ideally right constitution. And there is an equal want of agreement as to the intrinsic lawfulness of introducing such a constitution in violation of the traditional and established order in any community. For some think that a nation has a natural right to the right or best form of government, and that it ought to be introduced by force. Others, however, hold that though the ideal polity may rightly be proclaimed and commended, and every means used to prepare the way for its introduction which the established government in any country permits; still, rebellion against this latter can never be justifiable. While others,—perhaps the majority,—would decide the question on utilitarian grounds, balancing the advantages of improvement against the evils of disorder.

But further, as we saw, it is not so easy to say what the established government is. For sometimes there occurs a clear rupture of order in a society, and a triumph of Might over Right: and then a new order, springing out of and jurally rooted in disorder. An authority declared by law to be illegitimate issues ordinances and controls the administration of justice. The question then arises, how far obedience is due to such an authority. All are agreed that usurpation ought to be resisted; but as to the right behaviour towards an established government which has sprung from a successful usurpation, there is great difference of opinion. Some think that it should be regarded as legitimate, as soon as it is firmly established: others that it ought to be obeyed at once, but under protest, with the purpose of renewing the conflict on a favourable opportunity: others think that this latter is the right attitude at first, but that a usurping government, when firmly established, loses its illegitimacy gradually, and that it becomes, after a while, as criminal to rebel against it as it was originally to establish it. And this last seems, on the whole, the view of Common Sense; but it seems impossible to define the point at which, or the period within which, the metamorphosis takes place [1].

[1] In discussing Justice, I did not notice this conflict of legalities: because (in modern times at least) it is but rarely that a change of government is accompanied by violent interference with the civil rights of the governed. Still,

But again, it is only in the case of an absolute government, where customary obedience is unconditionally due to one or more persons, that the fundamental difficulties of ascertaining the legitimacy of authority are of the simple kind just discussed. In a constitutionally governed state numerous other moral disagreements arise. For, in such a state, while it is of course held that the sovereign is morally bound to conform to the constitution[1], it is still disputed whether the subjects' obligation to obedience is properly conceived as conditional upon this conformity: and whether they have the moral right (1) to refuse obedience to an unconstitutional command; and (2) even to inflict on the sovereign the penalty of rebellion for violating the constitution. Again, there is often no little difficulty in determining what the constitutional obligations really are. I do not mean merely a difficulty of erudition, capable of being removed by a completer knowledge of historical facts and documents: but a difficulty arising from uncertainty as to the principles on which these ought to be treated. For the various limitations of sovereign authority comprised in the constitution have often been originally concessions extorted by fear from a sovereign previously absolute: and it is doubted how far such concessions are morally binding on the sovereign from whom they were wrested, and still more how far they are binding on

such an interference sometimes occurs: and then the determination of what I have called Conservative or Customary Justice becomes very perplexing. And sometimes the interference is only temporary, and the old order is afterwards restored: in which case the conflict of claims and expectations, arising out of different established orders, is theoretically insoluble: only a rough practical compromise can be effected.

[1] It is perhaps hardly necessary that I should here notice the Hobbist doctrine, revived in a modified form by Austin, that "the power of the sovereign is incapable of [legal] limitation." For no one now maintains pure Hobbism: and Austin is as far as possible from meaning that there cannot be an express or tacit understanding between Sovereign and Subjects, the violation of which by the former may make it morally right for the latter to rebel. In fact, as used by him, Hobbes' doctrine reduces itself to the rather unimportant proposition that a sovereign will not be punished for unconstitutional conduct through the agency of his own law-courts, so long as he remains sovereign. I may take this opportunity of observing that Austin's definition of Law is manifestly unsuited for our present purpose: since a law, in his view, is not a command that ought to be obeyed, but a command for the violation of which we may expect a particular kind of punishment.

those who succeed. Or, *vice versâ*, a people may have allowed liberties once exercised to fall into disuse: and it is doubted whether it retains the right of reclaiming them. And, generally, when a constitutional rule has to be elicited from a comparison of precedents, it may be disputed whether a particular act of either party should be regarded as a constitutive precedent or as an illegitimate encroachment. And hence we find that in constitutional countries men's view of what their constitution traditionally is has often been greatly influenced by their view of what it ideally ought to be: in fact, the two questions have rarely been kept quite distinct.

But even if we could ascertain clearly to what authority obedience is properly due, there remains the difficulty of defining the limits of such obedience. For no one in modern society maintains it to be due without qualification: we are always told that any authority ought to be disobeyed which commands immoral acts. But this is one of those tautological propositions, so common in popular morality, which convey no real information: the question is, what acts there are which do not cease to be immoral when they have been commanded by a rightful authority. There seems to be no clear principle upon which these can be determined. It has sometimes been said that the Law cannot override definite duties; but the obligation of fidelity to contract is peculiarly definite, and yet we do not consider it right to fulfil a contract of which the law has forbidden the execution. And, in fact, we do not find any practical agreement on this subject. For some would say that the duties of the domestic relations must yield to the duty of law-observance, and that (e.g.) a son ought not to aid a parent actively or passively in escaping the punishment of crime: while others would consider this rule too inhuman to be laid down, and others would draw the line between assistance and connivance. And similarly, when acts of extreme injustice are commanded by law: thus many have thought that laws could not make it right to deliver up a fugitive slave to his pursuers (and that without distinctly recognising any defect of authority in the persons from whom the law emanated). And others would consider that a certain degree of inexpediency in a law made it right to disregard it: this, however, seems

implicitly to admit that the duty of law-observance rests upon a utilitarian basis. Again, some jurists hold that we are not strictly bound to obey laws, when they command what is not otherwise a duty, or forbid what is not otherwise a sin: for that in the case of absolute duties prescribed only by positive laws, the alternatives of obeying or submitting to the penalty are morally open to us[1]. Others, however, think this principle too lax; and certainly no such offer of alternatives is ever expressed in the promulgation of laws.

Since, then, on all these points there seems to be so much difference of opinion, it seems idle to maintain that there is any clear and precise axiom or first principle of Order, intuitively seen to be true by the common reason and conscience of mankind. There is, no doubt, a vague general instinct bidding us obey laws as such (even bad laws) which may be fairly said to rest on a universal *consensus* of civilized society: but when we try to state any explicit proposition corresponding to this general instinct, the *consensus* seems to abandon us, and we are drawn into endless controversies. No doubt, in some states of society, the common sense of the community makes a much more absolute identification of the Legal and the Rightful than that which I have tried to express: but this unquestioning reverence for custom impedes social progress and seems to us now absurd[2].

§ 4. We have next to treat of Good Faith, or Fidelity to Promises, which it is natural to consider in this place, because, as has been seen, the Duty of Order or Law-observance has by some thinkers been based upon a prior duty of fulfilling a contract. No one, however, now regards the Social Contract as something that has actually taken place in a previous period

[1] Cf. Blackstone, *Introduction*, § 2. "In relation to those laws which enjoin only positive duties, and forbid only such things as are not *mala in se*, but *mala prohibita* merely, without any intermixture of moral guilt, annexing a penalty to non-compliance, here I apprehend conscience is no further concerned, than by directing a submission to the penalty in case of our breach of those laws... the alternative is offered to every man, 'either abstain from this or submit to such a penalty.'"

[2] Into the ethical difficulties peculiar to some departments of Law (commonly so called), as (e.g.) International Law, I have not thought it worth while to enter.

of history, but merely as a convenient fiction, a logical artifice, by which the mutual jural relations of the members of a civilized community may be neatly expressed.

Such an artifice has been extensively used in civil law. Whenever it is considered that, from the mere fact of a man taking up a certain relation to other men, certain rights and claims upon him accrue to those others, it may be convenient to express this by supposing a tacit contract on his part to perform certain services. But in stating the ethical principles of Common Sense, such a fiction would be out of place. The Duty of Order, as commonly recognised, seems essentially distinct from the Duty of Good Faith.

It must, however, be allowed that there has frequently been a close historical connexion between the two. In the first place, a considerable amount of Constitutional Law at least, in certain ages and countries, has been established or confirmed by compacts expressly made between different sections of the community: who agree that for the future government shall be carried on according to certain rules. The duty of observing these rules thus presents itself as a Duty of Fidelity to compact. Still more is this the case, when the question is one of imposing not a law, but a law-giver. Among primitive men the duty of observing Law is often too abstract to be felt with adequate force, unless it presents itself in the form of, or at least blended with, the duty of Fidelity to a Sovereign, who is the source of law. If the sovereign is definitely hereditary, he is conceived as having an original right to be obeyed, and the duty would still fall under the head of Order. But even in this case it may be desirable and customary to strengthen his authority by exacting an oath of allegiance from his subjects or a representative portion of them, or the chief men among them, or the officials: and this will be still more the case if he is wholly or partly elective. Thus the Duty of Order blends in the minds of men with the Duty of Good Faith, by which it is supported. Still, even in such cases, it can only be by a transparent fiction that the mass of the citizens can be regarded as bound by an engagement which only a few of them have actually taken: and this practice of strengthening the obligation of Order by an actual or fictitious engagement is not very suitable

to an advanced state of society, in which it sometimes leads to disagreeable complications.

We have already noticed the difference of opinion as to the right classification of the duty of Keeping Promises: in that some moralists have placed it under the head of Justice, while others have classified or even identified it with Veracity. It seems, indeed, to resemble both from different points of view: superficially regarded, it certainly seems more analogous to Veracity, as we fulfil the obligations of Veracity and Good Faith alike by effecting a correspondence between words and facts—in the one case by making fact correspond with statement, and in the other by making statement correspond with fact. But the analogy is imperfect: for we are not bound to make our actions correspond with our assertions generally, but only with our promises. If I merely assert my intention of abstaining from alcohol for a year, and then after a week take some, I am (at worst) ridiculed as inconsistent: but if I have pledged myself to abstain, I am blamed as untrustworthy. Thus the essential element of the duty of Good Faith seems to be not conformity to my own statement, but to the expectations that I have intentionally raised in others: and thus it appears to come within our definition of Conservative Justice. For we have seen that one account of Justice defines it as the disposition to satisfy natural and reasonable claims or expectations: and this account seemed true if it had only been precise: but on examining further, we found that such expectations were of various degrees of reasonableness, and that it is impossible or difficult to draw a clear line separating valid claims from invalid. But the observance of contracts seems to be a case where the above account of Justice is clearly applicable and sufficiently precise: no one can doubt that it is natural and reasonable to expect a man to keep his promise.

On this view, however, the question arises whether, when a promise has been understood in a sense not intended by the promiser, he is bound to satisfy expectations which he did not voluntarily create. Perhaps it is clear that he is so bound in some cases if the expectation was natural and such as most men would form under the circumstances: but that this is one of the more or less indefinite duties of Justice, and not

properly of Good Faith, as there has not been, strictly speaking, any promise at all. The normal effect of language is to convey the speaker's meaning to the person addressed (here the promiser's to the promisee), and we always suppose this to have taken place when we speak of a promise. If through any accident this normal effect is missed, we may say that there is no promise, or not a perfect promise.

The moral obligation, then, of a promise is perfectly constituted when it is understood by both parties in the same sense. And by the term "promise" we include not words only, but all signs, and even tacit understandings not expressly signified in any way, if such clearly form a part of the engagement. The promiser is bound to perform what both he and the promisee understood to be undertaken.

§ 5. Is, then, this obligation intuitively seen to be independent and certain?

It is often said to be so: and perhaps we may say that it seems so to unreflective common sense. But reflection seems at least to disclose a considerable number of qualifications of the principle; some clear and precise, while others are more or less indefinite.

In the first place, thoughtful persons would commonly admit that the obligation of a promise is relative to the promisee, and may be annulled by him. And therefore if the promisee be dead, or otherwise inaccessible and incapable of granting release, there is constituted an exceptional case, of which the solution must cause some difficulty[1].

Secondly, a promise to do an immoral action is held not to be binding, for the prior obligation not to do the act is paramount: just as in law a contract to do what a man is not legally free to do, is invalid: otherwise one could evade any moral obligation by promising not to fulfil it, which is clearly absurd[2]. But this principle must be limited to strict duties, as distinct from good actions, to which the agent is not definitely

[1] Vows to God constitute another exception: and it is thought by many that if these are binding, there must be some way in which God can be understood to grant release from them. But this it is beyond my province to discuss.

[2] The case seems less clear when the act has become immoral after the promise was made: still, here also, the prior duty of abstaining from it would be universally held to prevail.

bound. Here, however, the case of the duties arising out of the domestic relations may cause some difficulty: for though the fulfilment of these is thought to be strictly a matter of debt, we yet found it impossible to define their extent: and so the limits of their obligation, as compared with that of promises, might seem to be obscure[1]. Still, we may say generally that the obligation of a promise is held to be inferior to strict prior obligations, but only to these.

For these qualifications we may claim the general assent, at least of reflective persons. But there are others, the consideration of which is involved in more difficulty and dispute. These we must now proceed to examine: they will be found to depend partly on the conditions under which the promise is made, and partly on its nature and the consequences of executing it.

§ 6. In the first place, it is much disputed how far promises obtained by "fraud or force" are binding. As regards fraud, if the promise was understood to be conditional on the truth of a statement which is found to be false, it is of course not binding. But a promise may be made in consequence of such a fraudulent statement, and yet made quite unconditionally. Even so, if it were clearly understood that it would not have been made but for the false statement[2], probably most persons would regard it as not binding. But the false statement may be only one consideration among others, and it may be of any degree of weight: and it seems doubtful whether most moral men would feel justified in breaking a promise, because a single fraudulent statement had been a part of the inducement to make it.

Or, again, there may have been no explicit assertion, but only a suggestion of what is false: or no falsehood at all, stated or suggested, but only a suppression of truth. We ought also to consider the case in which the false impression has not been wilfully produced, but was either shared by the promisee or produced in some way unintentionally. Perhaps in this last case most would say that the bindingness of the promise is not

[1] For example, it might be doubted whether the promise of aid to a friend ought to override the duty of giving one's children a good education (supposing the two incompatible). Still, such doubts would be due rather to the indefiniteness of the rules prescribing the domestic duties than of the rule of Good Faith.

[2] What is here said of a "statement" may be extended to any mode of producing a false impression.

affected, unless it was expressly conditional. But even on this point Common Sense seems doubtful; and, still more, how far a promise is binding if any kind of deception or concealment is shewn to have been used to obtain it. We may observe that certain kinds of concealment are even justified by the law: in a contract of sale, for example, the law adopts the principle of "caveat emptor," and does not refuse to enforce the contract because the seller concealed defects in the article sold, unless he expressly declared it to be free from such defects. Still, this does not settle the moral question: on which we scarcely seem to have any clear intuition. The same may be said of promises obtained by force. The Law in civilized countries certainly refuses to enforce any contract procured in this way or by positive fraud: but the law nowhere undertakes to enforce all engagements, but only such as it thinks fit. It has been observed, that Utilitarianism is much more the accepted method in Law than in Ethics: and since the utilitarian ground of the obligation to fulfil promises is the advantage to society of the mutual reliance which thus becomes possible among men, and since it is not advantageous to society that men should rely upon the performance of engagements procured by fraud, or by force exercised in defiance of law, there are strong utilitarian reasons for regarding such engagements as invalid. Still, it seems impossible to state it as a clear intuition that a forcibly extorted promise ought not to be kept.

§ 7. But, secondly, even if a promise has been made quite freely and fairly, circumstances may alter so much before the time comes to fulfil it, that the effects of keeping it may be quite other than those which were foreseen when it was made. In such a case probably all would agree that the promisee ought to release the promiser. But if he declines to do this, it seems difficult to decide how far the latter is bound. Some would say that he is in all cases: while others would consider that a considerable alteration of circumstances removed the obligation—perhaps adding that all engagements must be understood to be taken subject to a general understanding that they are only binding if material circumstances remain substantially the same. But such a principle very much impairs the theoretical sharpness and clearness of the duty.

This difficulty assumes a new aspect when we consider the case already noticed, of promises made to those who are now dead or temporarily out of the reach of communications. For then there is no means of obtaining release from the promise; while at the same time its performance may be really opposed to the wishes—or what would have been the wishes—of both parties. The difficulty is sometimes concealed by saying that it is our duty to carry out the "intention" of the promise. For as so used the word Intention is, in common parlance, ambiguous: it may either mean the signification which the promisee attached to the terms employed, as distinct from any other signification which the common usage of words might admit: or it may include ulterior consequences of the performance of the promise, which he had in view in exacting it. Now we do not commonly think that the promiser is concerned with the latter. He certainly has not pledged himself to aim generally at the end which the promisee has in view, but only so far as some particular means are concerned: and if he considers these means not conducive to the end, he is not thereby absolved from his promise, under ordinary circumstances. But in the case supposed, when circumstances have materially changed, and the promise does not admit of revision, most persons would say that we ought to take into consideration the ulterior wishes of the promisee, and carry out what we sincerely think *would* have been his intention.

But the obligation thus becomes very vague: it is so difficult to tell from a man's wishes under one set of circumstances what he would have desired under circumstances varying from these in a complex manner: and practically this view of the obligation of a promise generally leads to great divergence of opinion. Hence it is not surprising that some hold that even in such a case the obligation ought to be interpreted strictly: while others go to the other extreme, and maintain that it ceases altogether.

Under this head we may consider the undertaking of society to execute the testaments of dead persons: because, though there is here no express promise, there seems to be a sufficiently clear understanding to impose on society a duty of Good Faith. We have not now to discuss how far the right of

bequest ought to be free or restricted in a well-ordered state, which is a question of politics: but whether, when a testament has been made on a clear understanding that the state will execute it, the latter can afterwards morally decline to do so, altogether or in part. Nor is the question raised, when the execution of the testament is settled and completed at once: as is ordinarily the case when the testator's property is distributed among persons living at the time of his death: but when it is appropriated to certain public uses, under regulations which remain continually in force. There seem two distinct principles upon which it is sought to limit the obligation in such cases. First it is said (as before) that when circumstances have materially changed, we ought to carry out what *would* have been the intentions of the testator under the changed state of things, rather than the prescriptions actually laid down by him. But secondly, it is sometimes doubted whether any obligation undertaken by the community, or any section of it which has a permanent existence, can last for ever: and whether such obligation does not intrinsically decay and come to an end in course of time. And so some have proposed that all such dispositions of property should be formally declared to be in force for a certain term of years only: after which time the community should enter into possession of the property. However, we do not doubt that there are some national contracts, the obligation of which has not this quality of becoming evanescent: and it is hard to see how these are to be distinguished from others, except on utilitarian grounds. For example, we think ourselves bound to pay the interest on loans contracted by our forefathers: and most of us think that we are bound to observe their treaties also. And yet a nation is at least excused for repudiating a treaty, when it is humiliating and oppressive: and perhaps we shall agree that no national engagement ought to be kept for ever, if the results of keeping it are manifestly harmful on the whole. For the contemplation of a perpetuity of such harmful results seems to force even the most reluctant Intuitionist to adopt a utilitarian view of the duty, at least to this extent. On similar grounds we do not think a nation eternally bound to observe, as a part of its constitutional law, any compact that may have been made between previously

divided or temporarily dissentient sections of itself: even though the compact may have been expressly announced as binding for ever. In short, we must conclude that some special qualifications of the duty of keeping engagements are needed in the case of nations or other undying corporations: though we can hardly elicit from Common Sense any clear decision as to what these are.

§ 8. It was laid down that a promise was binding in so far as it was understood on both sides similarly. This understanding is ordinarily attained with sufficient clearness, as far as the apprehension of express words or signs is concerned. Still, even here obscurity and misapprehension sometimes occur: and in the case of the tacit understandings with which promises are often complicated, a lack of definite agreement is not improbable. It becomes, therefore, of practical importance to decide the question previously raised, What duty rests on the promiser of satisfying expectations which he did not intend to create? I called this a duty not so much of Good Faith as of Justice, which prescribes the fulfilment of natural and reasonable expectations. How then shall we determine what these are? The method by which we commonly ascertain them seems to be the following. We form the conception of an average or normal man, and consider what expectations he would form under the circumstances, inferring this from the beliefs and expectations which men generally entertain under similar circumstances. We refer, therefore, to the customary use of language, and customary tacit understandings current among persons, in the particular relations in which promiser and promisee stand. Such customary interpretations and understandings are of course not obligatory upon persons entering into an engagement: but they constitute a standard which we think we may presume to be known to all men, and to be accepted by them, except in so far as it is explicitly rejected. If one of the parties to an engagement has deviated from this common standard without giving express notice, we think it right that he should suffer any loss that may result from the misunderstanding. In legal contracts the usage of words has often by judicial interpretation been fixed and hardened into a signification very different from the ordinary: still, both parties

are by law supposed to know this and to have used words accordingly. This criterion then is generally applicable: but if custom is ambiguous or shifting it cannot be applied: and then the just claims of the parties become a problem, the solution of which is very difficult, if not strictly indeterminate.

So far we have supposed that the promiser can choose his own words, and that if the promisee finds them ambiguous he can get them modified, or (what comes to the same thing) explained by the promiser. But we have now to observe that there are some promises where this is not the case: where a certain unalterable form of words has to be used if the promise is made at all. Here the difficulties of moral interpretation are obviously much increased. In such cases the promise is commonly imposed as a condition of holding some social status, so that the community at large is directly interested in its fulfilment and seems to stand as promisee. It would seem therefore that the promise ought to be interpreted in the sense in which its terms are understood by the community. And, no doubt, if their usage is quite uniform and unambiguous, this rule of interpretation is sufficiently obvious and simple. But since words are often used in different ways by different members of the same society, and especially with different degrees of strictness and laxity, it often happens that a promise to the community cannot strictly be said to be understood in any one sense: the question therefore arises, whether the promiser is bound to keep it in the sense in which it will be most commonly interpreted, or whether he may select any of its possible meanings. And if the formula is one of some antiquity, it is further questioned, whether it ought to be interpreted in the sense which its words would generally bear, or in that which they bore when it was drawn up, or, if they were then ambiguous, in the sense which appears to have been attached to them by the government that imposed the promise. On all these points it is difficult to elicit any clear view from Common Sense. And the difficulty is increased by the fact that there are often strong inducements to make these formal engagements, which cause even tolerably conscientious persons to take them in a strained and unnatural sense. When this has been done continually by many persons, a new general understanding

grows up as to the meaning of the engagements: sometimes they come to be regarded as "mere forms," or, if they do not reach this pitch of degradation, they are at least understood in a sense differing indefinitely from their original one. The question then arises, how far this process of gradual illegitimate relaxation or perversion can modify the moral obligation of the promise for a thoroughly conscientious person. It seems clear that when the process is complete, we are right in adopting the new understanding as far as Good Faith is concerned, even if it palpably conflicts with the natural meaning of language: although it is always desirable in such cases that the form of the promise should be changed to correspond with the changed substance. Unfortunately, the process rarely is complete: there is almost always a portion of the community which understands the engagement in the original strict sense: very often the new understanding is half-esoteric, and confined to the minority of persons whose attention is especially drawn to the subject. Here, probably, most professed moralists would say that we are bound not to aid the process of illegitimate relaxation or alteration, though we may avail ourselves of its results when it is absolutely complete: but it seems doubtful whether we can give this as the decision of Common Sense.

§ 9. It was said that a promise cannot abrogate a prior obligation: and, as a particular application of this rule, it would be generally agreed that no promise can make it right to inflict harm on any one. On further consideration, however, it appears doubtful how far the persons between whom the promise passed are included in the scope of this prohibition. For, first, it does not seem to be commonly held that a man is as strictly bound not to injure himself as he is to avoid harming others: and so it is scarcely thought that a promise is not binding because it was a foolish one, and will entail an amount of pain or burden on the promiser out of proportion to the good done to the promisee. Still, if we take an extreme case, where the sacrifice is very disproportionate to the gain, many conscientious persons would think that the promise ought rather to be broken than kept. And, secondly, a different question arises when we consider the possibility of injuring the promisee by fulfilling the promise. For when it is said to be

wrong to do harm to any one, we do not mean only what he thinks harm, but what really is so, though he may think it a benefit: for it seems clearly a crime for me to give any one what I know to be poison, even though he may be stubbornly convinced that it is wholesome food. But now suppose that I have promised *A* to do something, which, before I fulfil the promise, I see reason to regard as likely to injure him. The circumstances may be precisely the same, and only my view of them have changed. If *A* takes a different view and calls on me to fulfil the promise, is it right to obey him? Surely no one would say this in an extreme case, such as that of the poison. But if the rule does not hold for an extreme case, where can we draw the line? at what point ought I to give up my judgment to *A*, unless my own conviction is weakened? Or can we say that I ought always to break a promise, if I believe that my keeping it would be injurious to the promisee? Common Sense seems to give no clear answer.

To sum up: we seem able to state it as a moral intuition that a promise, express or tacit, is binding, if made by an individual, if the promiser has a clear belief as to the sense in which it was understood by the promisee, and if he is still in a position to grant release from it, but unwilling to do so, if it was not obtained by force or fraud, if it does not conflict with definite prior obligations, if we do not believe that its fulfilment will be harmful to the promisee, or will inflict a disproportionate sacrifice on the promiser, and, if circumstances have not materially changed since it was made. For the intuition thus qualified we may claim a clear *consensus:* but if any of the qualifications be omitted, the *consensus* seems to become evanescent, and our moral perceptions fall into obscurity and disagreement.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CLASSIFICATION OF DUTIES.—TRUTH.

§ 1. It may easily seem that when we have discussed Benevolence, Justice, and the observance of Law and Contract, we have included in our view the whole sphere of social duty, and that whatever other maxims we find accepted by Common Sense must be subordinate to the principles which we have been trying to define.

For whatever we owe definitely to our fellow-men, besides the observance of special contracts, and of positive Law, seems —at least by a slight extension of common usage—to be naturally included under Justice: while the more indefinite obligations which we recognise seem to correspond to the goodwill which we think ought to exist among all members of the human family, together with the stronger affections appropriate to special relations and circumstances. And hence it may be thought that the best way of treating the subject would have been to divide Duty generally into Social and Self-regarding, and again to subdivide the former branch into the heads which I have discussed one by one; afterwards adding such minor details of duty as have obtained special names and distinct recognition. And this is perhaps the proper place to explain why I did not adopt this course. The division of duties into Social and Self-regarding, though obvious, and acceptable enough as a rough *primâ facie* classification, does not on closer examination seem exactly appropriate to the Intuitional Method. For these titles naturally suggest that the happiness, of the agent or of others, is always the end and final determinant of right action: whereas the Intuitional doctrine

is, that at least certain kinds of conduct are prescribed absolutely, without reference to their effects upon happiness. And if a more general meaning be given to the terms, and by Social duties we understand those which consist in the production of certain effects upon others, while in the Self-regarding we aim at producing certain effects upon ourselves, the division is still an unsuitable one. For these consequences are not clearly recognised in the enunciation of common rules of morality: and in many cases we produce marked effects both on ourselves and on others, and it is not easy to say which (in the view of Common Sense) are most important: and again, this principle of division would sometimes make it necessary to cut in two the class of duties prescribed under some common notion: as the same rule may govern both our social and our solitary conduct. Take, for example, Courage. It seems clear that the prominence given to this Virtue in historic systems of morality has been due to the great social importance that must always attach to it, so long as communities of men are continually called upon to fight for their existence and well-being: but still the quality of bravery is the same essentially, whether it be exhibited for selfish or social ends.

At the same time it is no doubt true that when we examine with a view to definition the qualities that would be enumerated in any list of Virtues, we find, for the most part, that the corresponding maxims are not absolute and independent, but subordinate to the general principles of Prudence, Benevolence, and Justice: that is, we generally see that the quality denoted is only praiseworthy in so far as it promotes the ends of these wider virtues, and becomes blameworthy—though remaining in other respects the same—when it acts adversely to these ends. We have already noticed this result in one or two instances, and it will be illustrated at length in the following chapters. But though this is the case to a great extent, it is not so altogether: and the exceptions are, for our present purpose, of special importance, because specially characteristic of the method that we call Intuitionism.

Of these exceptions the most important are Truth and Purity. One distinguished writer[1] ranks these as two of the

[1] Whewell.

five Cardinal Virtues: and their importance in the modern view of morality will be generally allowed to be (at least) only secondary to that of the Virtues already discussed. In the present chapter I shall deal only with Truth; as it seems more convenient to consider the notion of Purity in close connexion with that of Temperance.

There is another reason, before noticed, for considering the duty of Truth in this place: its affinity, namely, with the duty of Good Faith or Fidelity to Promises. For either rule prescribes a certain correspondence between words and facts: and hence the questions that arise when we try to make the maxims precise are somewhat similar in both cases. For example, just as the duty of Good Faith did not lie in conforming our acts to the *admissible* meaning of certain words[1], but to the meaning which we knew to be put on them by the promisee: so the duty of Truth is not to utter words which *might*, according to common usage, produce in other minds beliefs corresponding to our own, but words which we believe will have this result on the persons whom we address. And this is usually a very simple matter, as the natural effect of language is to convey our beliefs to other men, and we commonly know quite well whether we are doing this or not. A certain difficulty arises, as in the case of promises, from the use of set forms imposed either by law or by custom; to which most of the discussion of the similar difficulty in the preceding chapter applies *mutatis mutandis*. In the case of formulæ imposed by law, it is doubted whether we are to understand the terms in any sense which they actually bear, or *ex animo imponentis;* and again, a difficulty is created by the gradual degradation or perversion of their meaning, which results from the strong inducements offered for their general acceptance: for thus they are continually strained and stretched until a new general understanding seems gradually to grow up as to the meaning of certain phrases: and it is continually disputed whether we may veraciously use the phrases in this new signification. A similar process continually alters the meaning of conventional expressions current in polite society. When a man declares that he "has great pleasure in accepting" a vexa-

[1] The case where set forms are used being the *exceptio probans regulam.*

tious invitation, or is "the obedient servant" of one whom he regards as an inferior, he uses phrases which were probably once deceptive. If they are so no longer, Common Sense condemns as over-scrupulous the refusal to use them where it is customary to do so. But Common Sense seems doubtful and perplexed where the process of degradation is incomplete, and there are still persons who may be deceived: as by the reply that one is "not at home" to an inconvenient visitor.

However, apart from the use of conventional phrases, the rule "to speak the truth" is not generally difficult of application in conduct. And many moralists have declared it to be a perfectly simple and definite intuition, needing no proof: an unexceptionable instance of an ethical axiom. I think, however, that patient reflection will shew that this view is scarcely confirmed by the Common Sense of mankind.

§ 2. For, first, it does not seem clearly agreed whether Veracity is an absolute and independent duty, or whether it is based upon some higher principle. We find (e.g.) that Kant regards it as a duty owed to oneself to speak the truth, because "a lie is an abandonment or, as it were, annihilation of the dignity of man." And this seems to be the view in which lying is prohibited by the Code of Honour, only that it is not thought (by men of honour as such) that the dignity of man is impaired by *any* lying: but only that lying for selfish ends, especially under the influence of fear, is mean and base. In fact there seem to be circumstances under which the Code of Honour prescribes lying. Here, however, it may be said to be plainly divergent from the morality of Common Sense. Still, the latter does not seem to tell us clearly whether truth-speaking is absolutely a duty, needing no further justification: or whether it is rather a natural right of each man to have truth spoken to him by his fellows, but still a right which may be forfeited or suspended under certain circumstances. Just as each man is thought to have a natural right to personal security generally, but not if he is himself attempting to injure others in life and property: and if we may even kill in defence of ourselves and others, it seems strange if we may not lie, if lying will defend us better. And again, just as the orderly and systematic slaughter which we call war is thought per-

fectly right under certain circumstances, though painful and revolting: so in the word-contests of the law-courts, the lawyer is commonly held to be justified in lying within strict rules and limits: for an advocate is thought to be over-scrupulous who refuses to say what he knows to be false, if he is instructed to say it[1]. Nor, again, are we thought to owe truth-speaking to madmen, if it would lead them to injure others, or even if it would be injurious to themselves.

And this latter instance suggests another general doubt as to the absoluteness of the rule: for a lie is usually harmful to the man deceived, whose interest it is to know the truth, which the deceiver seems to gain by concealing: but sometimes deception seems beneficial to its object, and so claims to be a right and virtuous act. And though Common Sense is very jealous of admitting that it can be right to deceive men for their good, yet it seems to concede this in an extreme case: for example, few would hesitate to lie to an invalid, if this seemed the only way of concealing facts that might produce a dangerous shock. Nor do I perceive that any one shrinks from telling fictions to children, on matters upon which it is thought well that they should not know the truth. But if the lawfulness of benevolent deception in any case be admitted, I do not see how we can decide when and how far it is admissible, by any clear method except that of Utilitarianism; that is, we must weigh the gain of any particular deception against the imperilment of mutual confidence involved in any violation of truth. The much-argued question of religious deception ("pious fraud") naturally suggests itself here. It seems clear, however, that Common Sense now pronounces against the broad rule, that falsehoods may rightly be told in the interests of religion. But there is a subtler form in which the same principle is still maintained by moral persons. It is sometimes said that the most important truths of religion cannot be conveyed into the minds of ordinary men, except by being enclosed, as it were, in a shell of fiction: so that by relating such

[1] It cannot be said that the advocate merely *reports* the false affirmations of others: since the whole force of his pleading depends upon his adopting them and working them up into a view of the case which, for the time at least, he appears to hold.

fictions as if they were facts, we are really performing an act of substantial veracity[1].

Reflecting upon this argument, we see that it is not after all so clear wherein Veracity consists. For from the beliefs immediately communicated by any set of affirmations inferences are naturally drawn, and we may clearly foresee that they will be drawn. And though commonly we intend that both the beliefs immediately communicated and the inferences drawn from them should be true, and a person who always aims at this is praised as candid and sincere: still we find relaxation of the rule prescribing this intention claimed in two different ways by at least respectable sections of opinion. For first, as was just now observed, it is sometimes held that if a conclusion is true and important, and cannot be satisfactorily communicated otherwise, we may lead the mind of the hearer to it by means of fictitious premises. But the exact reverse of this is perhaps a commoner view: viz. that it is only an absolute duty to make our actual affirmations true: for it is said that though the ideal condition of human converse involves perfect sincerity and candour, and we ought to rejoice in exhibiting these virtues where we can, still in our actual world concealment is frequently necessary to the well-being of society, and may be legitimately effected by any means short of actual falsehood. Thus it is not uncommonly said that in defence of a secret we may not *lie*[2], i. e. produce directly beliefs contrary to fact: but we may "turn a question aside," i. e. produce indirectly, by natural inference from our answer, a negatively false belief: or "throw the inquirer on a wrong scent," i. e. produce similarly a positively false belief. These two methods of concealment are known respectively as *suppressio veri* and *suggestio falsi*, and many think them legitimate under certain circumstances: while others say that if deception is to be practised at all, it is mere formalism to object to any one mode of effecting it more than another.

On the whole, then, reflection seems to shew that the rule

[1] While I write this (Aug., Sept., 1873) a certain religious school is publicly justifying itself in the manner above indicated for solemnly affirming a belief in the Fourth Commandment. It is urged that we may say that God created the world in 6 days and rested on the 7th, meaning that 1 : 6 is the divinely ordered proportion between rest and labour.

[2] Cf. Whewell, *Elements of Morality*, Book II. c. 15, § 299.

of Veracity, as commonly accepted, cannot be evolved into a definite first principle: for there is no real agreement as to how far we are bound to impart true beliefs to others: and while it is contrary to Common Sense to exact absolute candour under all circumstances, we yet find no secondary general principle, clearly defining when it is not to be exacted.

§ 3. There is, however, one method of exhibiting *à priori* the absolute duty of Truth, which we must not overlook: as if it be valid, it would seem that the exceptions and qualifications above mentioned have been only admitted by Common Sense from inadvertence and shallowness of thought.

It is said that if it were once generally understood that lies were justifiable under certain circumstances, it would immediately become quite useless to tell the lies, because no one would believe them: and that the moralist cannot lay down a rule which, if generally accepted, would be suicidal. To this there seem to be three answers. In the first place it is not necessarily an evil that men's confidence in each other's assertions should, *under certain peculiar circumstances*, be impaired or destroyed: it may even be the very result which we should most desire to produce: (e. g.) it is obviously a most effective protection for legitimate secrets that it should be universally understood and expected that those who ask questions which they have no right to ask will have lies told them: nor, again, should we be restrained from pronouncing it lawful to meet deceit with deceit, by the fear of impairing the security which rogues now derive from the veracity of honest men. Secondly, since the beliefs of men in general are not formed purely on rational grounds, it is not true that unveracity becomes altogether ineffective under circumstances where it is generally understood to be legitimate. We see this in the case of the law-courts. For though jurymen are perfectly aware that it is considered the duty of an advocate to try to persuade them of the innocence of any criminal he may defend, still a skilful pleader can often produce a conviction of his sincerity: and it remains a question of casuistry how far this kind of hypocrisy is justifiable. But, finally, it cannot be assumed as certain that it is never right to act upon a principle of which the universal application would be an undoubted evil. This may seem to con-

tradict what was previously given as an ethical axiom, "that what is right for me must be right for all persons under similar circumstances[1]." But it can easily be shewn that there is a special case within the range of the axiom in which the universal "all" is necessarily particularized into some: i. e. where *my* circumstances include (1) the knowledge that the rule is not universally accepted; and (2) the conviction that my act will not tend to make it so, to any extent worth considering. And it can hardly be said that these conditions are impossible: at least so long as clear and consistent views of morality are only attained by a small minority in any society, and casuistical debates are for the most part confined within the same limited sphere. Hence the argument we are discussing certainly lacks demonstrative cogency: though it undoubtedly directs our attention to an important danger of unveracity, which constitutes a strong—but not formally conclusive—utilitarian ground for speaking the truth.

[1] Cf. c. 1, § 3.

CHAPTER VIII.

OTHER SOCIAL DUTIES AND VIRTUES.

§ 1. WHEN we proceed to inquire how far the minor social duties and virtues recognised by Common Sense appear on examination to be anything more than special applications of the Benevolence—general or particular—discussed in chap. 4, the department of duty which most prominently claims our attention, is that which deals with the existence, and determines the legitimacy, of feelings antithetical to the benevolent.

For it seems that malevolent feelings are as natural and normal to man as the benevolent: not indeed in the same sense normal, that is not at all times and towards all men (for man seems to have naturally some kindly feeling for any fellow-man, when there is no special cause operating to make him love or hate: though this is obscured and counteracted in the lower stages of social development by the habitual hostility between strange tribes and races): but still as arising from causes that continually occur, and exemplifying a psychological law analogous to that by which the growth of benevolent feelings is explained. For just as we are apt to love those who are the cause of pleasure to us whether by voluntary benefits or otherwise: so by strict analogy we naturally dislike those who have done us harm, either consciously from malevolence or mere selfishness, or even unconsciously, as when another man is an obstacle to our attainment of a much-desired end. Thus we naturally feel ill-will to a rival who deprives us of an object of competition: and so in persons in whom the desire of superiority is strong, a certain dislike of any one who is more successful or prosperous than themselves is easily aroused: and

however repulsive to our moral sense, seems as natural as any other malevolent emotion. As regards their nature the malevolent affections seem (as was said) the exact antithesis of the benevolent: as they include a dislike of the presence of their object and a desire to inflict pain on it, and also a capacity of deriving pleasure from the pain thus inflicted.

If now we ask how far their indulgence is right and proper, the answer of Common Sense is not easy to formulate. For some would say broadly that they ought to be repressed altogether or as far as possible. And no doubt we blame all envy (though sometimes to exclude it altogether requires a magnanimity which we praise): and we regard as virtues or natural excellences the *goodhumour* which prevents one from feeling even pain, much less resentment, from trifling annoyances inflicted by others, the *meekness* which does not resent even graver injuries, the *mildness* and *gentleness* which refrain from retaliating them, the *placability* which accords forgiveness rapidly and easily, and the *mercy* which spares even deserved punishment. And yet most moralists have allowed instinctive resentment for wrong to be legitimate and proper: and we all think that punishment ought to be inflicted for offences, and also that there is a righteous anger and a virtuous indignation.

As regards punishment we have already noticed the change that has taken place in the moral view of mankind. What seems now to be commonly held is this: that punishment is properly and intrinsically due in return for wrong-doing, but that the individual wronged ought not to take pleasure in inflicting it and ought not, generally speaking, to inflict it himself, but to leave it to society to enforce: and if in any case he must himself punish, he ought to do so as the organ of society, or at any rate to punish the act as abstractly wrong and not requite it as injury done to himself. And in accordance with this view it is stated generally that anger must be directed always against wrong acts as such, and not against the agent: for though the anger may prompt us to punish him, it ought never to overcome our kindly feeling towards him. And certainly if this state of mind is possible, it seems the simplest reconciliation of the general maxim of Benevolence with the admitted duty of inflicting punishment.

But some think that to retain a genuine kindly feeling towards a man, while we are gratifying a strong impulse of aversion to his acts by inflicting pain on him, requires a subtle complexity of emotion too far out of the reach of ordinary men to be prescribed as a duty: and that we must allow as right and proper a temporary suspension of benevolence towards wrong-doers until they have been punished. And others go even further and say that this is required in the interests of society, since the mere desire to realize Justice will not practically be strong enough to repress offences: and that it is as serious a mistake to attempt to substitute this for natural resentment as it would be to substitute prudence for natural appetite in eating and drinking, or mere dutifulness for filial affection. Others, again (with Butler), make a distinction between Instinctive and Deliberate Resentment: saying that the former is legitimate in so far as it is required for the self-defence of individuals and the repression of mutual violence: but that deliberate resentment is not similarly needed, for if we act deliberately we can act from a better motive.

And even the rule of external duty, in respect of the actual infliction of punishment, is not easy to define. For it was said that punishment ought generally to be left to society (acting through its regular machinery of law-courts, judges, magistrates, &c.): but there are some acute injuries to individuals which the law does not punish at all, or not adequately, or not in time: and there is no clear agreement as to our duty in relation to these. For the Christian code seems to prescribe a complete and absolute forgiveness of such offences, and many Christians in all periods of Christianity have endeavoured to carry out this rule: the majority, however, appear to understand these prescriptions as really relating to malevolent feeling and not to actual punishment for wrong. Others, again, seem to hold that we ought to bear without retaliation any injuries or insults inflicted on ourselves, but that we may rightly retaliate on behalf of friends or relatives who cannot defend themselves. Most, however, would probably say that acts of retaliation were permitted to private persons, not exactly as punishments, but in self-defence, and for the sake of others whom impunity might encourage the wrong-doer to attack.

So that the question how far the precepts of Christianity are to be practically carried out seems to be determined on utilitarian grounds: we are to forgive except when forgiveness is likely to be attended with harmful consequences.

On the whole we may perhaps sum up by saying that a superficial view of the matter naturally leads us to condemn sweepingly all malevolent feelings and the acts to which they prompt, as contrary to the general duty of benevolence: but that the common sense of reflective persons recognises the necessity of relaxing this rule in the interests of society: only it is not clear as to the limits or principles of this relaxation, though inclined to let it be determined on utilitarian grounds.

§ 2. Of the remaining virtues that are clearly and exclusively social, most will be seen at a glance to have no independent maxims, but to be merely special applications of those already discussed. We need not, then, enter upon an exhaustive examination of these:—for it is not our object to frame a complete glossary of ethical terms—but for illustration's sake it may be well to discuss one or two of them; and I will select for examination Liberality with its cognate notions, partly on account of the prominence that it has had in the earlier ages of thought, and partly because of a certain complexity in the feelings with which it is usually regarded. Considered as a Virtue, Liberality seems to be merely Benevolence, as exhibited in the particular service of giving money, beyond the limits of strict duty. For in so far as it can be called a duty to be liberal, it is because in the performance of the more or less indefinite duties enumerated in chap. 4, we do not like exactness to be sought; a certain excess is needful if the duty is to be well done. And perhaps in the case of the poor this graceful excess is excluded by prudence: for though a poor man might make a great sacrifice in a small gift we should call this generous but scarcely liberal: for Liberality is a somewhat superficial virtue and seems to require an external abundance in the gift even more than a self-sacrificing disposition. It seems therefore to be possible only to the rich: and, as I have hinted, in the admiration commonly accorded to it there seems to be mingled an element which is not properly moral. For we are all apt to admire power, and we recognise

the latent power of wealth gracefully exhibited in a certain degree of careless profusion when the object is to give happiness to others. Indeed the vulgar admire the same carelessness as manifested even in selfish luxury.

The sphere of Liberality, then, lies generally in the fulfilment of the indefinite duties of Benevolence. But there is a certain borderground between Justice and Benevolence where it is especially shewn: i.e. in the full satisfaction of all customary expectations, even when indefinite and uncertain: as (e.g.) in the remuneration of services, in so far as this is governed by custom: and even where it is left entirely to free contract, and therefore naturally determined by haggling and bargaining (as market value generally) it is characteristic of a liberal man to avoid this haggling and to give somewhat higher remuneration than the other party might be induced to take, and similarly to take for his own services a somewhat lower payment than he might persuade the other to give. And again, since laws and contracts and promises and especially tacit understandings are sometimes doubtful and ambiguous, a liberal man will unhesitatingly adopt the interpretation which is least in his own favour, and pay the most that he can by any reasonable person be thought to owe, and exact the least that can be thought to be due to himself: that is, if the margin be, relatively to his resources, not considerable[1]. And of a man who does the opposite of all this we predicate Meanness: this being the vice antithetical to Liberality. Here again there seems no place for this particular vice if the amount at stake be considerable: for then we think it not mean to exact one's own rights to the full, and worse than mean to refuse another what he ought to have: in fact in such case we think that any indefiniteness as to rights should be practically removed by the decision of a judge or arbitrator. The vice of meanness then is, we may say, bounded on the side of vice by injustice: meanness itself is not a violation of Justice but of Benevolence: the mean man is blamed as choosing a little gain to himself rather than avoid annoying another. Here, again, an element

[1] If the amount at stake is such as to constitute a real sacrifice, the conduct seems to be more than liberal, and (unless blamed as extravagant) is rather praised as generous or highminded.

not strictly moral is included in the common disapprobation of meanness. For, as we have seen, a certain carelessness of money is admired as a sign of power and superiority: and the opposite habit is a symbol of inferiority. The mean man then is despised not as shewing this symbol (for it is not his poverty but his character that is despised), but because he prefers a little gain to the respect or favourable opinion of others. This preference, however, seems to be in bad taste, rather than wrong: and so our dislike of it is rather æsthetic than moral.

Meanness, however, has a wider sphere than Liberality, and refers not merely to the taking or refusing of money, but to taking advantages generally: in this wider sense the opposite virtue is Generosity.

In so far as the sphere of Generosity coincides with that of Liberality, the former seems partly to transcend the latter, partly to refer more to the internal disposition, and to imply a completer triumph of unselfish over selfish impulses. In the wider sense it is strikingly exhibited in conflict and competition of all kinds. Here it is sometimes called Chivalry. Reflection shews us that the virtue is Benevolence exhibited under circumstances which make it peculiarly difficult and therefore peculiarly admirable. For Generosity or Chivalry towards adversaries or competitors seems to consist in shewing as much kindness and regard for their well-being as is compatible with the ends and conditions of conflict: one prominent form of this being the endeavour to realize ideal justice in these conditions, not merely by observing all the rules and tacit understandings under which the conflict is conducted, but by resigning even accidental advantages. This latter is not of course considered a strict duty: nor is there even agreement as to how far it is right and virtuous: for what some would praise and approve, others would regard as quixotic and extravagant.

To sum up, we may say that the terms Liberality and Generosity, so far as they are strictly ethical, denote the virtue of Benevolence (including Justice to some extent) as exhibited in special ways and under special conditions. And the examination of the other minor social virtues would evidently lead to similar general results: though it might not always be easy to agree on their exact definitions.

CHAPTER IX.

SELF-REGARDING VIRTUES.

§ 1. In chap. 3 we noticed that a complete definition of Wisdom was not possible from the point of view adopted in the present treatise: because Wisdom is the faculty and habit of choosing the best means to the best ends, and in different methods of Ethics different ends are regarded as absolutely best. As (e.g.) in Egoistic Hedonism (cf. Book III.) the end of Self-love is so regarded: whereas according to the present method Self-interest must always give way to Duty. Still, within the limits fixed by other duties, Common Sense considers that Self-love is naturally authoritative over other impulses: and that it is a duty to seek our own happiness, except in so far as we are prohibited by strict rules of morality, or can promote the welfare of others by sacrificing it. There are no doubt some Intuitive Moralists (such as Kant) who deny that this can properly be a duty: but their argument seems to proceed on the assumption that our own [greatest[1]] happiness is what we always naturally seek and indeed cannot help seeking. Against this psychological doctrine I have argued at some length in a previous chapter[2]: and the ethical conclusion thus drawn from it is certainly at variance with Common Sense: for we commonly hold that men can and do sacrifice their own happiness both to lower and to higher impulses.

[1] The notion "greatest" is necessary to make the argument that I am noticing complete: but it is not expressed by Kant or others: if it were perhaps the fallacy of the argument would be obvious.

[2] Bk. I. c. 4, § 1.

There is then a Duty of seeking one's own happiness; commonly known as the Duty of Prudence.

We may observe a certain divergence in the accounts commonly given of this notion, which is not, however, difficult to explain. The Duty of Prudence is, as we have said, the Duty of aiming at one's own greatest happiness. But, since it is commonly thought that most persons equally desire their own good, though their efforts are not equally well directed to its attainment: in conceiving Prudence as a Virtue or Excellence, attention is often fixed almost exclusively on its intellectual side. Thus regarded, Prudence may be said to be merely Wisdom specialized by the definite acceptance of Self-interest as its sole ultimate end[1]. The two views, as was said, are easily harmonized: for in so far as it is our duty to seek our own interest, it is obviously our duty to do so Wisely; calculating carefully the best means to its attainment, and resisting all irrational impulses which may tend to perturb our calculations or prevent us from acting on them. How these calculations may best be pursued, and what value is to be attached to their results, are questions which we need not here consider further, as they have already been discussed at some length in Book II.

§ 2. There are, however, current notions of particular virtues, which would commonly be called Self-regarding: but yet with regard to which it is not quite clear whether they are merely particular applications of Prudence, or whether they have independent maxims.

Of these Temperance, one of the four cardinal virtues anciently recognised, seems the most prominent.

In its ordinary use, Temperance is the habit of controlling the principal appetites (or desires which have an immediate corporeal cause). The habit of moderating and controlling our desires generally is recognised by Common Sense as useful and desirable, but with less distinctness and emphasis.

All are agreed that our appetites need control: but in order to establish a maxim of Temperance, we have to determine

[1] The term is also used to denote a purely intellectual excellence: either as vaguely equivalent to Wisdom, or (as by Whewell) for the faculty of choosing the best means to *any* ends.

within what limits, on what principle, and to what end they ought to be controlled. Now in the case of the appetites for food, drink, sleep, stimulants, &c., no one doubts that bodily health and vigour is the end naturally subserved by their gratification, and that the latter ought to be checked whenever it tends to defeat this end (including in the notion of health the most perfect condition of the mental faculties, so far as this appears to depend upon the general state of the body). And, further, all would agree that bodily appetite ought never to be indulged, if the indulgence involves the loss of any greater gratification of whatever kind. So far Temperance is merely a special application of Prudence, or of the fundamental maxim of Egoistic Hedonism. Again, Common Sense undoubtedly holds that the gratification of appetite must not be allowed to interfere with the performance of duties: though it is perhaps doubtful how far this is recognised in the ordinary notion of Temperance. But here the distinction between strict duties and virtuous acts seems important: for, as we saw, when we come to consider the indefinite duties of Benevolence and Pity, it is scarcely admitted that we are bound always to postpone the gratification of our own appetites, if we can thereby render any service to others. At least it cannot be said that Common Sense definitely *prescribes* so much self-sacrifice as this: though it seems always to praise it, except in so far as it has a vague dread that the self-sacrifice may fail of its end.

Some, however, deduce from the obvious truth, that the maintenance of bodily health is the chief natural end of the appetites, a more rigid rule of restraint, and one that goes beyond prudence. They say that this end ought to fix not only the negative but the positive limit of indulgence: that the pleasure derived from the gratification of appetite should never be sought *per se* (even when it does not impair health, or interfere with duty, or with a greater pleasure of a different kind): but only in so far as such gratification is positively conducive to health. When we consider to what a marked divergence from the usual habits of the moral rich this principle would lead, we might be disposed to say that it is clearly at variance with Common Sense: but it is undeniable that it often meets with verbal assent.

There is, again, a third and intermediate view which accepts the principle that the gratification of appetite is not to be sought for its own sake, but admits other ends as legitimate besides the mere maintenance of health. E.g. Whewell[1] says, "The appetites...are to be indulged as subservient to the support of life, strength, and cheerfulness, and the cultivation of the social affections." We see that this rule need not be practically very austere, as there is scarcely any sensual pleasure that may not promote cheerfulness. And I think that some such principle is more or less consciously held by many. We certainly find that solitary indulgence in the pleasures of the table is very frequently regarded with quasi-moral aversion. And the banquets which are given and enjoyed by moral persons, are vaguely supposed to have for their end not the common indulgence of sensual appetites, but the promotion of conviviality and conversational entertainment. For it is generally believed that the enjoyment in common of a luxurious meal developes social emotions, and also stimulates the faculties of wit and humour and lively colloquy in general: and feasts which are obviously not contrived with a view to such convivial and colloquial gratifications seem to be condemned by refined persons. Still it would be going too far to state it as a maxim supported by Common Sense in respect of sensual pleasures generally, that they are never to be sought except they positively promote those of a higher kind.

§ 3. In the last section we have spoken chiefly of the appetites for food and drink. It is, however, in the case of the appetite of sex that the regulation morally prescribed most clearly and definitely transcends that of mere prudence: which is indicated by the special notion of Purity or Chastity[2].

At first sight it may perhaps appear that the regulation of the sexual appetite prescribed by the received moral code merely confines its indulgence within the limits of the union sanctioned by law: only that here, as the natural impulse is peculiarly powerful and easily excited, it is especially necessary to prohibit any acts, internal as well as external, that tend even

[1] *Elements of Morality*, Bk. II. c. 10.

[2] The notion of Chastity is nearly equivalent to that of Purity, only somewhat more external and superficial.

indirectly to the transgression of these limits. And this is to a great extent true: still on reflection it will appear, I think, that our common notion of purity implies a standard independent of law: for, first, conformity to this does not necessarily secure purity: and secondly, all illegitimate sexual intercourse is not thought to be impure[1], and it is only by inadvertence that the two notions are sometimes confounded. But it is not very clear what this standard is. For when we interrogate the moral consciousness of mankind, we seem to find two views, a stricter and a laxer, analogous to the two interpretations of Temperance last noticed. It is agreed that the sexual appetite ought never to be indulged for the sake of the sensual gratification merely, but as a means to some higher end: but some say that the propagation of the species is the only legitimate, as it is obviously the primary natural, end: while others regard the development of mutual affection in a union designed to be permanent as an end perfectly admissible and right. I need not point out that the practical difference between the two views is considerable: so that this question is one which it is necessary to raise and decide. But it may be observed that any attempt to lay down minute and detailed rules on this subject seems to be condemned by Common Sense as tending to defeat the end of purity: as such minuteness of moral legislation invites men in general to exercise their thoughts on this subject to an extent which is practically dangerous[2].

I ought to point out that the Virtue of Purity is certainly not merely self-regarding, and is therefore properly out of place in this chapter: but the convenience of discussing it along with Temperance has led me to take it out of its natural order. Some, however, would go further, and say that it ought to be treated as a distinctly social virtue: for the propagation and rearing of children is one of the most important of social interests: and they would maintain that Purity merely

[1] In so far as mere illegitimacy of union is conceived to be directly and specially prohibited, and not merely from considerations of Prudence and Benevolence, it is regarded as a violation of Order rather than Purity.

[2] It was partly owing to the serious oversight of not perceiving that Purity itself forbids too minute a system of rules for the observance of purity that the mediæval Casuistry fell into extreme, and on the whole undeserved, disrepute.

connotes a sentiment protective of these important functions, supporting the rules which we consider necessary to secure their proper performance. But it seems clear that, though Common Sense undoubtedly recognises this tendency of the sentiment of Purity to maintain the best possible provision for the continuance of the human race, it still does not regard that as the fundamental point in the definition of this rule of duty, and the sole criterion in deciding whether acts do or do not violate the rule. For there are certain kinds of conduct which do not, at first sight, appear incompatible with the attainment of this end, though further investigation may shew them to be so; but which we unhesitatingly condemn as contrary to purity, without waiting for any such investigation.

There seem to be no similar difficulties or questions with respect to other desires. We recognise, no doubt, a general duty of self-control: but this is merely as a means to the end of acting rationally (whatever our interpretation of rational action may be): it only prescribes that we should yield to no impulse which prompts us to act in antagonism to ends or rules deliberately accepted. The view that the gratification of impulse is in itself objectionable seems not to be taken by Common Sense in respect even of all sensual impulses. We do not (e.g.) commonly condemn the most intense enjoyment of muscular exercise, or warmth, or coldness, or bathing, which are all purely sensual gratifications. Indeed, the only other case, besides that of the appetites above discussed, in which the Common Sense of our age and country seems even tempted to admire the Stoical or ascetical attitude towards natural impulses, is that of the promptings of pain and danger. We shall have occasion to discuss this in the next chapter.

CHAPTER X.

COURAGE, HUMILITY, &c.

§ 1. BESIDES the Virtue of Purity, which we found it convenient to discuss in the last chapter, there remain one or two prominent excellences of character which do not seem to be commonly admired and inculcated with any distinct reference either to individual or general happiness: and which, though in most cases obviously conducive to one or other of these ends, sometimes seem to influence conduct in a direction at variance with them.

For example, Courage is a quality which excites general admiration, whether it is shewn in self-defence, or in aiding others, or even when we do not see any benefit resulting from the particular exhibition of it. Again, in Christian societies, Humility (if believed sincere) often obtains unqualified praise, in spite of the loss that may evidently result from a man's underrating his own abilities. It will be well, therefore, to examine how far in either case we can elicit a clear and independent maxim defining the conduct commended under each of these notions.

To begin with Courage. For clearness' sake it seems convenient to denote by "Courage" a disposition to face danger of any kind without shrinking. We sometimes also call those who bear pain unflinchingly courageous: but this quality of character we more commonly distinguish as Fortitude. Now it seems plain that if we seek for a definition of *strict duty* under the head either of Courage or of Fortitude, we can find none that does not involve a reference to other maxims and ends. For no one would say that it is our *duty* to face danger or to

bear avoidable pain generally, but only if it meets us in the course of duty[1]. And even this needs further qualification. For all determinate duties are to be fulfilled under all circumstances: and therefore, of course, in spite of pain or danger. But as regards such indeterminate duties as those of general Benevolence, it would be commonly allowed that pain and danger are to be taken into account in practically determining them: e.g. one is not bound to attempt to save even the life of another if the risk of losing one's own is very great: and similarly for smaller services.

Therefore the maxim can only be that we are to face pain and danger in the performance of strict duty and for an adequate end of Prudence or Benevolence: the difficulty of determining what ends are adequate depending (1) on the uncertainty of hedonistic comparison, and (2) on the difficulty which was before noticed of defining exactly how much is prescribed under the notion of Benevolence. If we might identify the fundamental precept of Benevolence, as recognised by Common Sense, with the Utilitarian principle that we ought to aim at promoting the greatest happiness of mankind generally; it would follow that we are bound to run any risk, if the chance of additional benefit to be gained for any one outweighs the chance of loss to ourselves if we fail. But it did not seem clear that the common estimate of the duty of Benevolence could be said to amount quite to this[2].

When, however, we consider Courage as an Excellence rather than a Duty, it seems to hold a more independent position in our moral estimation. And this view corresponds more completely than the other to the common application of the notion: as there are many acts of courage, which are not altogether within the control of the Will, and therefore cannot be regarded as strict duties. For (1) danger is frequently sudden and needs to be met without deliberation, and under such circumstances our acts seem to depend entirely on our inherited and formed character. And (2) though naturally timid persons

[1] In the case of pain which cannot be avoided we consider that Fortitude will suppress outcries and lamentations: though in so far as these relieve the sufferer without annoying others, the duty seems doubtful.

[2] *Cf. ante*, c. 4, § 4.

can perhaps with effort control fear as they can anger or appetite, if time be allowed for deliberation, and can prevent it from taking effect in dereliction of duty: still this result is not all that is required for the performance of courageous acts, as these need more than ordinary energy—whereas the energy of the timid virtuous man is liable to be exhausted in the effort to control his fear: e.g. in battle he can perhaps stand still to be killed as well as the courageous man, but not charge with the same impetuosity or strike with the same vigour and precision.

Here then what has been called the Æsthetic view of morality, which considers moral qualities as objects of admiration rather than approbation, is in place: for we only approve of the voluntary, but we admire much besides the voluntary. And when we thus consider the matter, there seems no doubt that we naturally and immediately admire courage without reference to any end served by it, and when the dangers which call it forth might be avoided without any dereliction of duty. There is, however, a limit here: for we call a man foolhardy who runs unnecessarily into dangers beyond a certain degree. Where then is the limit to be fixed? On utilitarian principles we should endeavour to strike as exact a balance as possible between the amount of danger incurred in any case and the probable benefit of cultivating and developing by practice a habit so frequently necessary for the due performance of important duties. This will obviously give a different result for different states of society and different callings and professions: as most people need this instinctive courage less in civilized societies than in semi-barbarous ones, and civilians less than soldiers. Perhaps the instinctive admiration of mankind for acts of daring does not altogether observe this limit: but we may say, I think, that in so far as it attempts to justify itself on reflection, it is commonly in some such way as this: and Common Sense does not seem to point to any limit depending on a different principle.

§ 2. As the Virtue of Courage is prominent in Pagan ethics, and in the Code of Honour which may be regarded as a sort of survival of the pagan view of morality: so Humility especially belongs to the ideal set before mankind by Christianity. The common account, however, of this virtue is

somewhat paradoxical. For it is generally said that Humility prescribes a low opinion of our own merits: but if our merits are comparatively high, it seems strange to direct us to have a low opinion of them. It may be replied, that though our merits may be high when compared with those of ordinary men, there are always some to be found superior, and we can compare ourselves with these, and in the extreme case with ideal excellence, of which all fall far short: and that we ought to make this kind of comparison and not the other kind, and contemplate our faults—of which we shall assuredly find a sufficiency—and not our merits. But surely in the most important deliberations which human life offers, in determining what kind of work we shall undertake and to what social functions we shall aspire, we must necessarily compare our qualifications carefully with those of other men, if we are to decide rightly. And it would seem just as irrational to underrate ourselves as to overrate: and though most men are more prone to the latter mistake, there are certainly some rather inclined to the former.

It seems, then, that the common account of Humility is erroneous: and perhaps we may say that it is the result of imperfect reflection on the common judgments in which this notion is used. For it would appear, when we look closer at the quality commonly *praised* under this name (which is not always used eulogistically), that Humility is regulative of two different impulses, one entirely self-regarding and internal, the other relating to others and partly taking effect in social behaviour. The internal duty relates, strictly speaking, not to the opinions we form of ourselves (for here as in other opinions we ought to aim at nothing but Truth), but to the emotion of self-admiration, which springs naturally from the contemplation of our own merits, and as it is highly agreeable, prompts to such contemplation. Now this admiring self-complacency is condemned: but not, I think, by an intuition that claims to be ultimate, as it is commonly justified by the reason that such self-admiration, even if well-grounded, tends to check our progress towards higher virtue. The mere fact of our feeling this admiration is thought to be evidence that we have not sufficiently compared ourselves with our ideal, or that our ideal is not sufficiently high: and it is thought to be indispensable to

moral progress that we should have a high ideal and should continually contemplate it. At the same time, we obviously need some care in the application of this maxim. For all admit that self-respect is an important auxiliary to right conduct: and moralists continually point to the satisfactions of a good conscience as part of the natural reward which Providence has attached to virtue. Yet it is difficult to distinguish the glow of self-approbation which attends the performance of a virtuous action from the complacent self-consciousness which Humility seems to exclude. Perhaps we may say that the feeling itself is natural and a legitimate pleasure, but that if prolonged and fostered it soon impedes moral progress: and that this part of the duty of Humility needs enforcing because most of us have a tendency to indulge this feeling overmuch. On this view the maxim is clearly a dependent one. The end to which it is subordinate is progress in Virtue generally: and Humility prescribes such repression of self-satisfaction as will tend to promote this end. As for such pride and self-satisfaction as are based not on our own conduct and its results, but on external and accidental advantages, these are condemned as involving a false and absurd view as to the nature of real merit.

But we not only take pleasure in our own respect and admiration, but still more, generally speaking, in the respect and admiration of others. The desire for this, again, is held to be to some extent legitimate, and even a valuable aid to morality: but as it is a dangerously seductive impulse, and frequently acts in opposition to duty, it is felt to stand in special need of self-control. Humility, however, does not so much prescribe the repression of this desire, as of the claim for its satisfaction which we are naturally disposed to make upon others. We are inclined to demand from others "tokens of respect," some external symbol of their recognition of our elevated place in the scale of human beings; and to complain if our demands are not granted. Such claims and demands Humility bids us repress. It is thought to be our duty not to allow ourselves even to formulate them. We are not to exact, generally speaking, even the expression of reverence which others are strictly bound to pay.

And yet here, again, there is a limit, in the view of Common

Sense, at which this species of behaviour passes over into a fault: for the omission of marks of respect is sometimes an insult which impulses commonly regarded as legitimate and even virtuous (sense of Dignity, Self-respect, Proper Pride, &c.) prompt us to repel. But the ascertainment of this limit involves complex difficulties, and I think it is quite impossible to claim a *consensus* for any mode of determining it. For there is, first, the difficulty (discussed in ch. 4) of ascertaining the debt of reverence in any case: and when this is settled there remains the further doubt as to the duty of claiming it. And this doubt is peculiarly insoluble by the method of reflection on Common Sense, which we are now pursuing: for the present seems to be one of the few cases in which Christian teaching has not completely penetrated and become identified with the morality of Common Sense in modern Europe. I do not mean that ordinary persons distinctly recognise this discrepancy: that would be impossible, as Christian Morality is commonly considered to be completely true: but still this is a case in which the type of character that Christian tradition seems to recommend does not quite correspond to the moral ideal of the mass of reflective persons even in Christian countries.

CHAPTER XI.

REVIEW OF THE MORALITY OF COMMON SENSE.

§ 1. We have now concluded such detailed examination of the morality of Common Sense as, on the plan laid down in chap. 1, it seemed desirable to undertake. We have not discussed all the terms of our common moral vocabulary: but I believe that we have omitted none that are important either in themselves or relatively to our present inquiry. For of those that remain we may fairly say, not only that they denote minor duties, but that they manifestly will not furnish independent maxims: for a slight reflection shews that the conduct designated by them is either prescribed merely as a means to the performance of duties already discussed; or is really identical with the whole or part of some of these, viewed in some special aspect, or perhaps specialized by the addition of some peculiar circumstance or condition.

Let us now pause and survey briefly the process in which we have been engaged, and the results which we have elicited.

We started with admitting the point upon the proof of which Intuitional Moralists usually concentrate their efforts, the existence of apparently independent moral intuitions. We avoided the paradox of denying that men judge acts to be right and wrong in themselves, without consideration of their tendency to produce the agent's happiness or that of others: and indeed without taking their consequences into account at all, except in so far as these are included in the common notion of the act. We saw, however, that in so far as these judgments are passed on particular cases, they seem to involve (at least for the more reflective part of mankind) a

reference of the case to some general rule of duty: and that when the judgments of different individuals conflict, the conflict takes the form of a dispute whether an act is or is not included in a certain class. Now if ethical science exists, or can be constituted, it must prove its existence by substituting, to some extent at least, the clearness and harmony that are characteristic of science, for the vagueness, confusion, and conflict which are incident to mere unscientific opinion in all departments of thought. To this end it was necessary to obtain exact definitions of the commonly recognised classes of right actions: and the natural method of obtaining these seemed to be reflection upon the usage of the terms by the aid of which our common moral thought proceeds.

Here, again, we did not lay stress on the preliminary objections in which some writers have found a short and summary refutation of Intuitionism. Because a moral judgment is commonly attended with (and frequently warped by) emotions more or less strong, we did not therefore argue that such a judgment must necessarily be no more than the expression of a subjective sentiment, and that the objectivity implied in its form must be illusory. Because the moral opinions of ordinary men are in many points loose, shifting, and mutually contradictory, it does not follow that we may not obtain by reflection, from this fluid mass of opinion, a deposit of clear and precise principles commanding universal acceptance. For truths may be intrinsically self-evident which are yet not commonly seen to be so: indeed the fundamental notions of science, as they exist in ordinary minds, are so vague that men often accept as true or probable theories of which the impossibility can be demonstrated *à priori*[1]. Nor, again, do the discrepancies shewn by an impartial comparison of the moral codes of different ages and countries, militate decidedly against the possibility of ethical science. They certainly warn us that the subject is one upon which the human mind is prone to error: but they do not necessarily prove that truth is unattainable. For in all departments of thought people in other times and countries have held other opinions than ours: but this does not impair our con-

[1] Nor is this only true of ordinary men. Even Galileo's first hypothesis as to the law of accelerating force involved a mathematical contradiction.

viction that we have in some departments at length found the true method by which scientific knowledge may be substituted for mere opinion.

It appears, in short, that no summary general argument can dispense us from the task of carefully examining the notions and principles which we commonly use in our moral reasonings. The question, whether we can frame with these notions a set of general propositions which shall have the characteristics of scientific truth, is one which can and should be put to the test of experiment. It is in order to prepare materials for this experiment that the survey in the preceding eight chapters has been conducted. In our common moral discourse it is assumed that there are certain principles prescribing, under certain common names and notions, the different kinds of conduct which are thought right and reasonable in different departments of life. I have endeavoured to ascertain impartially, by mere reflection on common opinion, what these principles are. I wish it to be particularly observed, that I have in no case introduced my own views, in so far as I am conscious of their being at all peculiar to myself. My sole object has been to make explicit the implied basis of our common moral reasoning: to formulate and tabulate the ultimate enunciations of that Conscience or Moral Faculty which is thought to be a possession of ordinary men no less than of philosophers. I now wish to subject the results of this survey to a rigorous examination, in order to ascertain whether these rules or principles possess the characteristics by which we distinguish knowledge from opinion.

§ 2. The truths of science are known to us in two ways, by direct intuition, or by processes of inference in which the ultimate premises must, of course, be intuitively or perceptively known. For our present purposes we need only examine the characteristics of the former, intuitively known, truths.

There seem to be four conditions, the complete fulfilment of which would establish a proposition in the highest degree of certainty attainable: while in proportion as they are approximately realized by the premises of our reasoning in any department, that reasoning (if formally sound) seems to deserve the name of Scientific.

I. The terms with which the principles are constructed must be clear and precise. The rival originators of modern Methodology, Descartes and Bacon, vie with each other in the stress that they lay on this point: and the latter's warning against the "notiones male terminatæ" of ordinary thought is peculiarly needed in ethical discussion. In fact my chief business in the preceding survey has been to free the fundamental notions of Ethics, as far as possible, from objection on this score.

II. The principles must be really self-evident. It may seem idle to state this; as of course an Intuitive Truth, as such, claims to be self-evident. But, in fact, most persons are liable to confound intuitions, on the one hand with mere impressions or impulses, which to careful observation do not present themselves as claiming objective validity; and on the other hand, with mere opinions, to which the familiarity that comes from frequent hearing and repetition often gives an illusory air of self-evidence which attentive reflection disperses. In such cases the Cartesian test of intuitions may be of real use; if applied with the rigour which Descartes certainly intended, and not with the laxity which impairs the value of the important work of Reid. A rigorous demand for self-evidence in our premises is a protection against the misleading internal influence of our own irrational impulses: while at the same time it not only distinguishes as inadequate the mere external support of authority and tradition, but also excludes the more subtle and latent effect of these in fashioning our minds to a facile and unquestioning admission of common but unwarranted assumptions.

And we may observe that the application of this test is especially needed in Ethics. For, on the one hand, it cannot be denied that any strong sentiment, however purely subjective, is apt to transform itself into the semblance of an objective intuition; and it requires careful contemplation to detect the illusion. Whatever we desire we are apt to pronounce desirable: and we are strongly tempted to approve of whatever conduct gives us keen pleasure[1]. And on the other hand, among the rules of conduct to which we customarily conform, there are

[1] Hence the practical importance of the Formal test of Rightness, on which Kant insists: cf. *ante*, c. 1, § 3.

many which reflection shews to be really derived from some external authority: so that even if their obligation be unquestionable, it cannot be intuitively ascertained. This is of course the case with the Positive Law of the community to which we belong. There is no doubt that we ought,—at least generally speaking,—to obey this: but what it is we cannot of course ascertain by any process of abstract reflection, but only by consulting Reports and Statutes. Here, however, the sources of knowledge are so definite and conspicuous, that we are in no danger of confounding the knowledge gained from studying them with the results of abstract contemplation. The case is somewhat different with the traditional and customary rules of behaviour which exist in every society, supplementing the regulative operation of Law proper. A great part of these are of course conceived to be merely applications to special circumstances of the principles of abstract morality: so that, though they may actually have become known to us by tradition, they are still supposed capable of a rational deduction. But along with, and often rather perplexingly blended with, these we all habitually obey rules which no one would maintain to be intrinsically reasonable: though they have not been issued by any definite authority, or embodied in any express formulæ, they yet appear to the reflective mind as external as positive laws.

We may take for illustration two systems of rules which have often been compared with Morality: the Law of Honour, and the Law of Fashion or Etiquette. The former case, no doubt, is not unambiguous: for the Honourable in conduct is commonly thought to be a species of the Beautiful—or perhaps we should rather say that the Dishonourable is a species of the Ugly—and it is not generally admitted that there is no absolute standard of Beauty and its opposite. Still, when we speak of the Code of Honour we seem to mean rules of which the exact nature is to be finally determined by an appeal to the general opinion of well-bred persons: we admit that a man is in a sense "dishonoured" when this opinion condemns him, even though we may think his conduct unobjectionable or even intrinsically beautiful[1]. Similarly, when we consider from the point of view

[1] Take, for example, the case of a Frenchman at the present day, who having received an insult, declines on religious grounds to challenge his insulter.

of reason the rules of Fashion or Etiquette, some may seem useful and commendable, some indifferent and arbitrary, some perhaps absurd and burdensome: but nevertheless we recognise that the final authority on matters of Etiquette is the custom of polite society: which feels itself under no obligation of reducing its rules to rational principles. Yet it must be observed that each individual in any society commonly finds in himself a knowledge not obviously incomplete of the rules of Honour and Etiquette, and an impulse to conform to them without requiring any further reason for doing so. Each often seems to see at a glance what is honourable and fashionable just as clearly as he sees what is right: and it requires some consideration to discover that in the former cases custom and opinion are the final authority from which there is no appeal. And even in the case of rules regarded as distinctly moral, we can generally find an element that seems to us as clearly conventional as the codes just mentioned, when we contemplate the morality of other men, even in our own age and country. Hence we may reasonably suspect a similar element in our own moral code: and must admit the great importance of testing rigorously any rule which we find that we have a habitual impulse to obey; to see whether it really expresses or can be referred to a clear intuition of rightness.

III. The propositions accepted as self-evident must be mutually consistent. Here, again, it is obvious that any collision between two intuitions is a proof that there is error in one or other, or in both. Still, we frequently find ethical writers treating this point very lightly. They appear to regard a conflict of ultimate rules as a difficulty that may be ignored or put aside for future solution, without any slur being thrown on the scientific character of the conflicting formulæ. Whereas such a collision is absolute proof that at least one of the formulæ needs qualification: and suggests a doubt whether the correctly qualified proposition will present itself with the same self-evidence as the simpler but inadequate one: and whether we have not mistaken for an ultimate and independent axiom one that is really derivative and subordinate.

IV. Since it is implied in the very notion of Truth that it is intrinsically the same for all minds, any defect in the universal

acceptance of a proposition must *pro tanto* impair our confidence in its validity. And in fact "universal consent" has often been held to constitute by itself a sufficient proof of the most important beliefs: and is practically the only one upon which the greater part of mankind can rely. But a proposition accepted as true upon this ground alone is not scientifically known to the mind that so accepts it: scientific knowledge (strictly speaking) we only possess in the case of truths of which we can ourselves see the evidence. Still this does not impair, it rather exhibits and explains, the importance of the criterion of universal acceptance: for the persons who have thus seen the evidence for themselves are just those whose agreement constitutes the most (if not the only) valuable portion of the *consensus* of mankind in general. And it will be easily seen that this agreement must remain an indispensable negative condition of the certainty of our beliefs. For if I find any of my intuitions in direct conflict with an intuition of some other mind, there must be error somewhere: and if I have no more reason to suspect error in the other mind than in my own, reflective comparison between the two intuitions necessarily reduces me temporarily to a state of neutrality. And though the total result in my mind is not exactly suspense of judgment, but an alternation and conflict between the positive affirmation of one act of thought and the neutrality that is the result of another: it is obviously something very different from scientific certainty.

Now if the account given of the Morality of Common Sense in the preceding chapters be in the main correct, it seems clear that, generally speaking, its principles do not fulfil the conditions just laid down. So long as they are left in the state of somewhat vague generalities, as we meet them in ordinary discourse, we are disposed to yield them unquestioning assent, and it may be fairly claimed that the assent is approximately universal. But as soon as we attempt to give them the definiteness which science requires, we find that we cannot do this without abandoning the universality of acceptance. We find, in some cases, that alternatives present themselves, between which it is necessary that we should decide; but between which we cannot pretend that Common Sense does decide, and which often seem equally or nearly equally plausible. In other cases the moral

notion seems to resist all efforts to obtain from it a definite rule: in others it is found to comprehend elements which we have no means of reducing to a common standard. Even where we seem able to educe from Common Sense a more or less clear reply to the questions raised in the process of definition, the principle that results is qualified in so complicated a way that its self-evidence becomes dubious or vanishes altogether. And thus in each case what at first seemed like an intuition turns out to be either the mere expression of a vague impulse, needing regulation and limitation which it cannot itself supply, but which must be drawn from some other source: or a current opinion, the reasonableness of which has still to be shewn by a reference to some other principle.

In order that this result may be adequately exhibited, I must ask the reader to travel with me again through the series of principles elicited from Common Sense in the previous chapters, and to examine them from a different point of view. Before, we were trying to ascertain impartially what the deliverances of Common Sense actually are: we have now to ask how far these enunciations can claim to be classed as Intuitive Truths.

§ 3. If we begin by considering the duty of acting wisely, discussed in ch. 3, we may seem perhaps to have before us an axiom of undoubted self-evidence. For acting wisely appeared to mean taking the right means to the best ends: i.e. taking the means which Reason indicates to the ends which Reason prescribes. And it is evident that it must be right to act reasonably. Equally undeniable is the immediate inference from, or negative aspect of, this principle: that it is wrong to act irrationally. This, taken in connexion with the empirical fact of impulses in our minds conflicting with Reason, gives—as another self-evident principle—the maxim of Temperance or Self-control in its widest interpretation: i.e. 'That Reason should never give way to Appetite or Passion[1].' And these

[1] In c. 9, Temperance was regarded as subordinate to, or a special application of, Prudence or Rational Egoism: because this seemed to be on the whole the view of Common Sense, which in the preceding chapters I have been endeavouring to follow as closely as possible, both in stating the principles educed, and in the order of their exposition.

principles have sometimes been enounced with no little solemnity as answering the fundamental question of Ethics and supplying the basis or summary of a doctrine of Practice.

But this statement of principles turns out to be one of those stages, so provokingly frequent in the course of ethical reflection, which, as far as practical guidance is concerned, are really brief circuits, leading us back to the point from which we started. Or rather, to prevent misapprehension, it should be observed that the maxims just given may be understood in two senses: in one sense they are certainly self-evident, because they are really identical propositions, slightly veiled: in another sense they include more or less distinctly a direction to an important practical duty, but as so understood they lose their self-evidence. For if the rules of Wisdom and Self-control mean (1) that we ought always to do what we see to be reasonable, and (2) that we are not to yield to any impulse urging us in an opposite direction: they simply affirm that it is our duty (1) generally and (2) under special temptations, to do what we see to be our duty: and do not even tend to remove our perplexities as to the method and principles by which duty is to be determined.

But if they are further understood (as they sometimes are understood) to prescribe the cultivation of a habit of acting rationally; that is, of referring each act to definitely conceived principles and ends, instead of allowing it to be determined by instinctive impulses: then I cannot consider the affirmation of this as an universal and absolute rule of duty to be self-evidently true. For when Reason is considered not in the present as actually commanding, but as an End of which a fuller realization has to be sought in the future; the point of view from which its sovereignty has to be judged is entirely changed. The question is no longer whether the dictates of Reason ought always to be obeyed, but whether the dictation of Reason is always a Good: whether any degree of predominance of Reason over Impulse must necessarily tend to the perfection of the conscious self of which both are elements. And it is certainly not self-evident that this predominance cannot be carried too far: and that Reason is not rather self-limiting, perceiving that her ends are sometimes better attained by those who do not directly aim at them.

We have seen[1] that Hedonists frequently recognise the necessity of such a limitation in the conscious pursuit of that Happiness which they regard as the ultimate end of rational action. And the contrary view, though it is one that orthodox moralists have always had a certain tendency to adopt, is certainly not supported by Common Sense: which is inclined to hold that in many matters instinct is a better spring of action than reason[2]. For example, it is commonly said that a healthy appetite is a better guide to diet than a doctor's prescription: and, again, that marriage is better undertaken as a consequence of falling in love than in execution of a tranquil and deliberate design: and again we saw (ch. 4) that there is a certain excellence in services springing from spontaneous affection which does not attach to similar acts done from pure sense of duty. And more generally, it may be at least plausibly maintained of many acts requiring promptitude and vigour that they will be more energetic and effective, and of many requiring tact and delicacy that they will be more graceful and pleasant to others, if they are done from other motives than the conscious impulse to do what is reasonable and right. It is not necessary here to inquire how far this view is true: it suffices to say that we cannot affirm *à priori* that it is not true to some extent: that there may not be—to use Plato's analogy—*over-government* in the individual soul no less than in the state. The residuum, then, of clear intuition which we have so far obtained, is the tautological proposition that it is our duty to do our duty.

§ 4. Let us pass now to what I have called the duties of the Affections, the rules that prescribe either love itself in some degree, or the services that naturally spring from it in those relations where it is expected and desired. Here, in the first place, the question how far we are bound to render these services when we do not feel the affection, is answered differently in many cases by different persons, and no definite answer seems self-evident without further proof. And similarly if we ask whether affection itself is a duty: for on the one hand it is at least only partially within the control of the will, and in so far

[1] Cf. *ante*, c. 1, § 2: and Bk. II. c. 3, § 5.
[2] Cf. *ante*, Bk. II. c. 6, § 2.

as it can be produced by voluntary effort, there is thought to be something unsatisfactory and unattractive in the result: and on the other hand, in certain relations it seems to be commonly regarded as a duty. On those points the doctrine of Common Sense is rather a rough compromise between conflicting lines of thought than capable of being evolved into a clear and universally accepted axiom. And if we confine ourselves to the special relations where Common Sense admits no doubt as to the duty of at least rendering the services to which affection naturally prompts, still the formulæ that express those duties are, in the first place, not sufficiently precise and definite: and secondly, they do not, when rigorously examined, appear to have the character of primary and independent intuitions. Let us take, for example, the duty of parents to children. We have no doubt about this duty as a part of the general order of society, by which the due growth and training of the rising generation is distributed among the adults. But when we reflect on this arrangement itself, we cannot say *intuitively* that it is the best possible. It may be plausibly maintained that children would be better trained, physically and mentally, if they were brought up under the supervision of physicians and philosophers, in large institutions maintained out of the general taxes. We cannot decide *à priori* which of these alternatives is preferable: we have to refer to psychological and sociological generalizations, obtained by empirical study of human nature in actual societies. If, however, we consider the duty of parents by itself, out of connexion with this social order, is it self evident that we owe more to our own children than to others who will manifestly starve if we neglect them? To get the question clear, suppose that I am thrown with my family upon a desert island, where I find an abandoned orphan. Is it evident that I am less bound to provide this child, as far as lies in my power, with the means of subsistence, than I am to provide for my own children? No doubt I have a stronger natural prompting to take care of the latter: but that in itself is quite distinct from a prior duty. And if it be said that I owe more to my own children because I have brought them into being, the argument when closely scrutinized seems to carry us to singular conclusions. For it may be surely urged that just on this ground I have a right to

diminish their happiness, provided I do not turn it into a negative quantity. As without me they would not have existed at all, they can, as my children, have no claim upon me for more than an existence on the whole above zero in respect of happiness: an existence of which the pleasure just more than counterbalances the pain. Nay, I might even go further and assert a right (so far as any special claim of theirs is concerned) to extinguish them painlessly at any point of their existence, if only their life up to that point has been on the whole worth having: for persons who would have had no life at all but for me cannot fairly complain that they are not allowed more than a certain quantity[1]. I do not mean to assert that these doctrines are even implicitly held by Common Sense: but merely to shew that here, as elsewhere, the pursuit of an irrefragable intuition may lead us unaware into a nest of paradoxes.

It seems, then, that we cannot, after all, say that the special duty of parents to children, considered by itself, possesses clear self-evidence: and it was easy to shew (cf. ch. 4) that as recognised by Common Sense its limits were indeterminate.

The rule prescribing the duty of children to parents need not detain us: for even to Common Sense it seemed doubtful whether this was not merely a particular case of gratitude: and we certainly have no clear intuition of what is due to parents who do not deserve gratitude. Again, the moral relation of husband and wife seems to depend chiefly upon contract and definite understanding. Still, it is usually thought that Morality prescribes certain conditions for all connubial contracts: and in our own age and country it is held that they should be (1) monogamic and (2) permanent. But neither of these opinions appears to be a primary intuition. As to the latter, all would no doubt admit that we admire fidelity in all affections, and especially in so close and intimate a relation as the conjugal: but we cannot tell *à priori* how far it is possible to prevent decay of love in all cases: and we certainly do not discern intuitively that the conjugal relation ought to be maintained when love has ceased: nor that if the parties have separated

[1] It may be noticed that a view very similar to this has often been maintained in considering what God is in justice bound to do for human beings in consequence of the quasi-parental relation in which he stands to them.

by mutual consent, they ought to be prohibited from forming fresh unions. In so far as we are convinced of the rightness of this regulation, it is always, I think, from a consideration of the pernicious consequences that would ensue if it were relaxed. Monogamy, again, is clearly the most obvious and natural arrangement: but we do not seem to apprehend intuitively, as a first principle, that all but monogamic unions ought to be prohibited. Nor does this seem to be generally maintained: but the moral necessity of prohibiting polygamy is sometimes put forward as an immediate inference from the equality of the numbers of the two sexes. But this argument assumes that all men and women ought to marry: this, however, scarcely any one is prepared to maintain: and actually considerable numbers remain unmarried, and there is no reason to believe that in countries where polygamy is allowed, paucity of supply has ever made it practically difficult for any one to find a mate.

We shall have to consider presently, under another head, the basis of the moral rules that govern the relations between the sexes. Meanwhile it is not irrelevant to notice the great variety and strange divergence of the regulations respecting marriage, to which reflective minds seem to be led when they are once set loose from the trammels of tradition and custom: as exhibited in the speculations of philosophers in all ages—especially of those (as e.g. Plato) to whom we cannot attribute any sensual or licentious bias.

And as for such conjugal duties as are not prescribed by Law, probably no one at the present day would maintain that there is any such general agreement as to what these are, as would support the theory that they may be known *à priori*.

If, then, in these domestic relations, where the duties of affection are commonly recognised as so imperative and important, we can find no really intuitive and primary principles for determining them: I need not perhaps spend time in shewing that the same is the case in respect of the less intimate ties (of kindred, neighbourhood, &c.) that bind us to other human beings. Indeed, this was made sufficiently manifest in our previous discussion of those other duties.

No doubt there are certain obligations towards human

beings generally which have an axiomatic appearance: as, for example, the negative duty of abstaining from causing pain to others, except by way of deserved punishment (whether this is to be placed under the head of Justice or Benevolence): to which we may add the immediate corollary that we ought to make reparation for any pain which we may have caused. Still, when we try to define the limit of these duties, we see that it cannot be done in the abstract with any precision, in such a manner as to command general assent. There is certainly little doubt that we ought not to cause pain to any one except as a means of obtaining some happiness for the sufferer or for some one else: though perhaps those who consider Freedom as an absolute end ought scarcely to accept even this statement without qualification. But what we want practically to know is, how far we may legitimately cause pain to other men (or other sentient beings) in order to obtain happiness for ourselves or third persons; or even to confer a greater good on the sufferer himself, if the pain be inflicted against his will. And for deciding this point we do not seem able to obtain any clear and generally accepted principle, unless the Utilitarian formula be admitted as such. Again, as regards Reparation, there is, as we have seen, a fundamental doubt how far this is for harm that has been involuntarily caused.

Similarly, all admit the general duty of rendering services to our fellow-men and especially to those who are in special need, and that we are bound to make sacrifices for them, when the benefit that we thereby confer very decidedly outweighs the loss to ourselves; but when we ask how far we are bound to give up our own happiness in order to promote that of others, Common Sense is not prepared with any definite answer.

And even the principle of Gratitude, though its stringency is perhaps more immediately and universally felt than that of any other moral rule, seems yet incurably indefinite: owing to the fundamental difficulty of determining whether the requital of a benefit ought to be proportionate to what it cost the benefactor, or what it is worth to the recipient.

§ 5. When we pass to consider that element of Justice under which, as it seemed, the duty of Gratitude might be subsumed, the same difficulty recurs in a more complicated form.

For here, too, we have to ask whether the Requital of Desert ought to be proportioned to the benefit rendered, or to the effort made to render it. Here, however, we seem distinctly to accept the latter as the true standard, so far as we are considering what is ideally or abstractly just. For when we scrutinize closely the notion of personal merit, it appears, strictly taken, to imply the metaphysical doctrine of Free Will: since every excellence in any one's actions or productions seems referable ultimately to causes other than himself, except the original energy of the soul put forth in the effort to realize freely chosen Good or Right: and it does not seem strictly just that a man should be rewarded for the qualities which he has by nature or education, any more than for the wealth or power which may come to him by inheritance.

Still, for men at least to attempt to reward Free Will alone is obviously chimerical: and, indeed, we may say on the other hand, that it would be paradoxical in estimating Desert to omit the moral excellences derived from nature and education: or even intellectual excellences, since good intention without foresight is commonly felt to constitute a very imperfect merit. But even if we cut through this speculative difficulty by leaving the ultimate reward of real Desert to Divine Justice; and if we dispose similarly of the partial discrepancy that exists, on the Intuitional view, between the *goodness* and the *utility* of actions, settling as our practical rule that men must reward benefits rendered to men: we still seem unable to find any clear principles for framing a scale of services arranged according to their value. And much the same may be said of the scale of Demerit which Criminal Justice seems to require. And even if these difficulties were overcome, we should still be only at the commencement of the perplexities in which the determination of Justice is involved. For the examination of the contents of this notion, which we conducted in ch. 5, furnished us not with a single definite principle, but with a whole swarm of principles, which are unfortunately liable to come into conflict with each other; and of which even those, that, when singly contemplated, have the air of being self-evident truths, do not certainly carry with them any intuitively ascertainable definition of their mutual boundaries and relations. Thus, for example, in construct-

ing an ideally perfect distribution of the means of happiness, it seemed necessary to take into account the notion (as I called it) of Fitness, which, though often confounded with Desert, seems essentially distinct from it. For the social "distribuend" includes not merely the means of obtaining pleasurable passive feelings, but also functions and instruments, which are important sources of happiness, but which it is obviously reasonable to give to those who can perform and use them. And even as regards the material means of comfort and luxury—wealth, in short—we do not find that the same amount produces the same result of happiness in every case: and it seems reasonable that the means of refined and varied pleasure should be allotted to those who have the corresponding capacities for enjoyment[1]. And yet these may not be the most deserving, so that this principle may clearly conflict with that of requiting Desert.

And either principle, as we saw, is liable to come into collision with the widely-accepted doctrine that the proper ultimate end of Law is to secure the greatest possible Freedom of action to all members of the community: and that all that any individual, strictly speaking, owes to any other is non-interference, except so far as he has further bound himself by free contract. But further, when we come to examine this principle in its turn, we find that, in order to be at all capable of affording a practicable basis for social construction, it needs limitations and qualifications which make it look less like an independent principle than a *medium axioma* of Utilitarianism: and that it cannot without a palpable strain be made to cover the most important rights which positive law secures. For example, the justification of permanent appropriation is surely rather that it supplies the only adequate motive for labour than that it, strictly speaking, realizes Freedom: nor can the questions that arise in determining the limits of the right of property—such as whether it includes the right of bequest—be settled by any deductions from this supposed fundamental principle. Nor, again, can even the enforcement of contracts be fairly said to

[1] For example, many hold that wealth is, roughly speaking, rightly distributed when cultivated persons have abundance and the uncultivated a bare subsistence, and that raising wages of unskilled labourers will not make them really happier, or not to any important degree.

be a realization of Freedom: for a man seems, strictly speaking, freer when no one of his volitions is allowed to control any other. And if we disregard this as a paradoxical subtlety, we are met on the opposite side by the perplexity that if abstract Freedom is consistent with any engagement of future services, it must on the same grounds be consistent with such as are perpetual and unqualified, and so even with actual slavery. And this question becomes especially important when we consider that the duty of obeying positive laws has by many been reconciled with the abstract right of Freedom, by supposing a 'tacit compact' or understanding between each individual and the rest of his community. This Compact, however, seems on examination too clearly fictitious to be put forward as a basis of moral duty: as is further evident from the indefinitely various qualifications and reservations with which the 'understanding' has by different thinkers been supposed to be 'understood.' Hence many who maintain the 'Birthright of Freedom' consider that the only abstractly justifiable social order is one in which no laws are imposed without the *express* consent of those who are to obey them. But we found it impossible really to construct society upon this basis: and such Representative Governments as have actually been established only appear to realize this idea by means of rather sweeping limitations and rather transparent fictions. It was manifest, too, that the maximum of what is called Constitutional Freedom, i.e. the most perfect conformity between the action of a government and the wishes of the majority of its subjects, need by no means result in the maximum of Civil Freedom being established in the society so governed.

But even if we could delineate to our satisfaction an ideal social order, including an ideal form of government, we have still to reconcile the duty of realizing this with the conformity due to the actual order of society. For we have a strong conviction that positive laws ought, generally speaking, to be obeyed: and, again, our notion of Justice seemed to include a general duty of satisfying the expectations generated by custom and precedent. Yet if the actual order of society deviates very much from what we think ought to exist, the duty of conforming to it seems to become obscure and doubtful. And apart

from this we can hardly say that Common Sense regards it as an axiom that Laws ought to be obeyed. Indeed, all are agreed that they ought to be disobeyed when they command what is wrong: though we do not seem able to elicit any clear view as to what remains wrong after it has been commanded by the sovereign. And, again, the positive laws that ought to be obeyed as such, must be the commands issued by a (morally) rightful authority: and though these will generally coincide with the commands legally enforced, we cannot say that this is always the case: for the courts may be temporarily subservient to a usurper; or, again, the sovereign hitherto habitually obeyed may be one against whom it has become right to rebel (since it is generally admitted that this is sometimes right). We require, then, principles for determining when usurpation becomes legitimate and when rebellion is justifiable: and we do not seem able to elicit these from Common Sense—except so far as it may be fairly said that on this whole subject Common Sense inclines more to the Utilitarian method than it does in matters of private morality.

Still less can we state the general duty of satisfying "natural expectations"—i. e. such expectations as an average man would form under given circumstances—in the form of a moral axiom. No doubt a just man will generally do this: but it can hardly be maintained that the mere existence of a custom renders it clearly obligatory that any one should conform to it who has not already promised to do so: especially since bad customs can only be abolished by individuals venturing to disregard them.

§ 6. We have still to examine (whether as a branch of Justice or under a separate head) the duty of fulfilling express promises and distinct understandings. The peculiar confidence which moralists have generally felt in this principle is strikingly illustrated by those endeavours to extend its scope which we have just had occasion to notice: and it certainly seems to surpass in simplicity, certainty, and definiteness the moral rules that we have hitherto discussed. Here, then, if anywhere, we seem likely to find one of those ethical axioms of which we are in search. Now we saw that the notion of a Promise requires several qualifications not commonly noticed to make it precise:

but this is no reason why we may not construct with it an intuitive principle, such as when enunciated and understood will obtain universal acceptance. For similarly the uninstructed majority of mankind could not define a circle as a figure bounded by a line of which every point is equidistant from the centre: but nevertheless, when the definition is explained to them, they will accept it as expressing the perfect type of that notion of roundness which they have long had in their minds. And the same potential universality of acceptance may, I think, be fairly claimed for the propositions that the promise which the Common Sense of mankind recognises as binding must be understood by promiser and promisee in the same sense at the time of promising, and that it is relative to the promisee and capable of being annulled by him, and that it cannot override prior obligations[1].

But the case is different with the other qualifications which we had to discuss. When once the question of introducing these has been raised, we see that Common Sense is clearly divided as to the answer: and we can no longer claim even the implicit consent of mankind for our principle, however we define it. If we ask (e.g.) how far a promise is binding if it was made in consequence of false statements, on which, however, it was not understood to be conditional? or if important circumstances were concealed, or the promiser was in any way led to believe that the consequences of keeping the promise would be different from what they turn out to be? or if the promise was given under compulsion? or if circumstances have materially altered since it was given, and we find that the results of fulfilling it will be different from what we foresaw when we promised? or even if it be only our knowledge of consequences which has altered, and we now see that fulfilment will entail on us a sacrifice out of proportion to the benefit received by the promisee? or perhaps that they will be injurious to him though he may not think so? different conscientious persons would answer these and other[2] questions (both generally and in particular

[1] There was some difficulty (cf. c. 6) about such prior obligations as are not strictly determinate: but it is not worth while to dwell on this here.

[2] I have omitted as less important the special questions connected with promises to the dead or to the absent, or where a form of words is prescribed, which were discussed in c. 6.

cases) in different ways: and though we could perhaps obtain a decided majority for some of these qualifications and against others, there would not in any case be a clear *consensus* either way. And, moreover, the mere discussion of these points seems to make it plain that the confidence with which the "unsophisticated conscience" asserts unreservedly 'that promises ought to be kept,' is the result of inadvertence: and that when the qualifications to which we referred are fairly considered, this confidence inevitably changes into hesitation and perplexity. It should be added, that some of these qualifications themselves suggest a reference to the more comprehensive principle of Utilitarianism, as one to which this particular rule is naturally subordinate.

Again, reflection upon the ordinary classification of this duty tends to confirm our distrust of the original deliverance of Common Sense in respect of it. For, as was seen, Fidelity to promises is very commonly ranked with Veracity: as though the mere fact of my having said that I would do a thing were the ground of my duty to do it. But the least reflection shews that this view is superficial and due to inadvertence, and does not express our real thought. We perceive that the obligation must be regarded as contingent on the reliance that another has placed on my assertion: that, in fact, the breach of duty is constituted by the disappointment of expectations voluntarily raised. And when we see this we become less disposed to maintain the absoluteness of the duty: it seems now to depend upon the amount of harm done by disappointing expectations: and we shrink from saying that the promise ought to be kept, if the keeping it would involve an amount of harm that seems decidedly to outweigh this.

The case of Veracity we may dismiss somewhat more briefly, as here it was still more easy to shew that the common enunciation of the unqualified duty of Truth-speaking is made without full consideration, and cannot approve itself to the reflective mind as an absolute first principle. For, in the first place, we found no clear agreement as to the fundamental nature of the obligation; or as to its exact scope, i.e. whether it is our actual affirmation as understood by the recipient which we are bound to make correspondent to fact (as far as we can), or whatever

inferences we foresee that he is likely to draw from this, or both. To realize perfect Candour and Sincerity, we must aim at both: and we no doubt admire the exhibition of these virtues: but no one seems to think that they ought to be exhibited under all circumstances. And, secondly, it seems to be admitted by Common Sense, though vaguely and reluctantly, that the principle, however defined, is not of universal application: as we do not think that truth ought always to be told to children, or madmen, or invalids, or by barristers: and we are not sure that we are bound to tell it to enemies or robbers, or even to persons who ask questions which they know they have no right to ask (if a mere refusal to answer would practically reveal an important secret). And when we consider the limitations generally admitted, it seems still more plain than in the last case, that they depend upon and are determined by utilitarian reasonings, implicit or explicit.

§ 7. If, then, the prescriptions of Justice, Good Faith, and Veracity, as laid down by Common Sense, appear so little capable of being converted into first principles of scientific Ethics, it seems scarcely necessary to inquire whether such axioms can be extracted from the minor maxims of social behaviour, such as the maxim of Liberality or the rules restraining the Malevolent Affections: or, again, from such virtues as Courage and Humility, which we found it difficult to class as either social or self-regarding. Indeed, it was made plain in ch. 9, that as regards the proper regulation of resentment, Common Sense can only be saved from inconsistency or hopeless vagueness by adopting the "interest of Society" as the ultimate standard: and in the same way we cannot definitely distinguish Courage from Foolhardiness except by a reference to the probable tendency of the daring act to promote the well-being of the agent or of others, or to some definite rule of duty prescribed under some other notion. Similarly the duties of Temperance, Self-control, and other cognate virtues, are only clear and definite in so far as they are conceived as subordinate either to Prudence (as is ordinarily the case), or to Benevolence or some definite rule of social duty, or at least to some end of which the conception involves the notion of duty supposed already determinate, as

"furtherance of moral progress[1]." Certainly the authority of Common Sense cannot be fairly claimed for any more strict or ascetic regulation even of the bodily appetites for food and drink.

In the case, however, of the sexual appetite, a special regulation certainly seems to be prescribed on some independent principle under the notion of Purity or Chastity. In ch. 9, where we examined this notion, we were met by the fact that Common Sense is not only not explicit, but actually averse to explicitness, on this subject. As my aim in the preceding chapters was to give, above all things, a faithful exposition of the morality of Common Sense, I allowed my inquiry to be checked by this (as it seemed) clearly recognisable sentiment. But when it becomes our primary object to test the intuitive evidence of the moral principles commonly accepted, it seems necessary to override this aversion: for we can hardly ascertain whether we have what can properly be called knowledge as to the acts allowed and forbidden under this notion and its opposite, without subjecting it to the same close scrutiny that we have endeavoured to give to the other leading notions of Ethics. Here the briefest account of such a scrutiny will be sufficient. I am aware that in giving even this I cannot but cause a certain disgust in the mind of a reader trained in good moral habits: but I trust I may claim the same indulgence as is commonly granted to the physiologist, who also has to direct the student's attention to objects which a healthy mind is naturally disinclined to contemplate.

What, then, is the conduct which Purity forbids (for the principle is more easily discussed in its negative aspect)? As the normal and obvious end of sexual intercourse is the propagation of the species, some have thought that all indulgence of appetite, except as a means to this end, should be prohibited. But this doctrine would lead to a restriction of conjugal intercourse far too severe for Common Sense. Shall we say, then, that Purity forbids such indulgence except under the conditions of conjugal union defined by Law? But this answer, again, further reflection shews to be unsatisfactory. For, first, we

[1] It was this conception that seemed to give the true standard of Humility, considered as a purely internal duty.

should not, on consideration, call a conjugal union impure, *merely* because the parties had wilfully omitted to fulfil legal conditions, and had made a contract which the law declined to enforce. We might condemn their conduct, but we should not apply to it this notion. And, secondly, we feel that positive law may be unfavourable to Purity, and that in fact Purity, like Justice, is something which the law ought to maintain, but does not always. What kind of sexual relations, then, are we to call essentially impure, whether countenanced or not by Law and Custom? On what principle is the line to be drawn? Are we (e. g.) to apply the term to Polygyny, legalised as it is among so large a portion of the human race? Few, perhaps, would stigmatize a legal polygynous connexion as impure, however they might disapprove of the law and of the state of society in which such a law was established. But if legal Polygyny is not impure, is Polyandry, when legal and customary, as it not unfrequently is among the lower races of man, to be so characterized? And, again, where divorce by mutual consent, with subsequent marriage, is legalized, we do not call this an offence against Purity: and yet if the principle of free change be once admitted, it seems paradoxical to distinguish purity from impurity merely by less rapidity of transition[1]; and to condemn as impure even "Free Love," in so far as it is earnestly advocated as a means to a completer harmony of sentiment between men and women, and not to mere sensual license?

Or again, how shall we judge of such institutions as those of Plato's Commonwealth, establishing community of women and children, but at the same time regulating sexual indulgence with the strictest reference to social ends? Our habitual standards seem inapplicable to such novel circumstances.

Shall we, then, fall back upon the presence of mutual affection (as distinguished from mere appetite) as constituting the essence of pure sexual relations? But this, again, while too lax from one point of view, seems from another too severe for Common Sense: as we do not condemn marriages without affection as impure, although we disapprove of them as productive of

[1] It should be observed that this is not the old fallacy of Acervus: as I am not asking for an exact quantitative decision, but whether we can really think that the decision depends upon considerations of this kind.

unhappiness. Such marriages, indeed, are sometimes stigmatized as "legalized prostitution," but the phrase is felt to be extravagant and paradoxical: and it is even doubtful whether we do disapprove of them under all circumstances: as (e. g.) in the case of royal alliances.

The truth seems to be, that reflection on the current sexual morality discovers to us two distinct grounds for it, which we may distinguish as external and internal: first and chiefly, the maintenance of a certain social order, believed to be most conducive to the prosperous continuance of the human race: and, secondly, the protection of habits of feeling in individuals believed to be generally most important to their perfection or their happiness. We commonly conceive that both these ends are to be attained by the same regulations: and in an ideal state of society this would perhaps be the case: but in actual life there is frequently a partial separation and incompatibility between them. But further, if the repression of sexual license is prescribed merely as a means to these ends, it does not, after all, seem that we can affirm *à priori* that it is always a necessary means in either case. Such a belief seems to be a mere "anticipatio mentis," invalid without empirical confirmation. We cannot be certain, without induction from extensive and careful sociological observation, that a certain amount of sexual license will be incompatible with the maintenance of population in sufficient numbers and good condition. And if we consider the matter in its relation to the individual's perfection, it is certainly clear that he misses the highest and best development of his emotional nature, if his sexual relations are of a purely sensual kind: but we can hardly know *à priori* that this lower kind of relation interferes with the development of the higher (nor indeed does experience seem to shew that this is universally the case). And this latter line of argument has a further difficulty. For the common opinion that we have to justify does not merely condemn the lower kind of development in comparison with the higher, but in comparison with none at all. Since we do not positively blame a man for remaining celibate (though we perhaps despise him somewhat unless the celibacy is adopted as a means to a noble end); it is difficult to shew why we should condemn—in its bearing

on the individual's emotional perfection solely—the imperfect development afforded by merely sensual relations.

Much more might be said to exhibit the perplexities in which the attempt to define the rule of Purity or Chastity involves us. But I do not desire to extend the discussion beyond what is necessary for the completion of my argument. It seems to me that the conclusion announced in § 2 of this chapter has now been sufficiently justified. We have examined the moral notions that present themselves with a *primâ facie* claim to furnish independent and absolute rules of morality: and we have in each case found that from such regulation of conduct as the Common Sense of mankind really supports, no proposition can be elicited which, when fairly contemplated, even appears to have the characteristics of a scientific axiom. It is therefore scarcely needful to proceed to a systematic examination of the manner in which Common Sense provides for the co-ordination of these principles. In fact, this question seems to have been already discussed as far as is profitable: for the attempt to define each principle singly has inevitably led us to consider their mutual relations: and it was in the cases where two moral principles came into collision that we most clearly saw the vagueness and inconsistency with which the boundaries of each are determined by Common Sense.

It only remains to guard my argument from being understood in a more sweeping sense than it has been intended or is properly able to bear. Nothing that I have said even tends to shew that we have not distinct moral impulses, claiming authority over all others, and prescribing or forbidding kinds of conduct as to which there is a rough general agreement, at least among educated persons of the same age and country. It is only maintained that the objects of these impulses do not admit of being scientifically determined by any reflective analysis of common sense. The notions of Benevolence, Justice, Good Faith, Veracity, Purity, &c. are not emptied of significance for us, because we have found it impossible to define them with precision. The main part of the conduct prescribed under each notion is sufficiently clear: and the general rule prescribing it does not lose its force because there is in each case a margin of conduct involved in obscurity and perplexity, or because the

rule does not on examination appear to be absolute and independent. In short, the Morality of Common Sense remains perfectly adequate to give practical guidance to common people in common circumstances: but the attempt to elevate it into a system of scientific Ethics brings its inevitable imperfections into prominence without helping us to remove them[1].

[1] It should be observed that the more positive treatment of Common-sense Morality, in its relation to Utilitarianism, to which we shall proceed in ch. 3 of the following book, is intended as an indispensable supplement of the negative criticism which has just been completed.

CHAPTER XII.

MOTIVES OR SPRINGS OF ACTION CONSIDERED AS SUBJECTS OF MORAL JUDGMENT.

§ 1. We saw in ch. 1, that motives as well as actions are commonly regarded as matter of moral intuition: and indeed that mode or process of the Moral Faculty which we call Conscience is commonly thought to judge primarily of the motive rather than the outward act. Perhaps, however, the distinction between Intuition and Motive is not always discerned in the common view. For we should explain "acting up to our conscience" to be "acting with the intention to do right" or "in the belief that what we are doing is right:" where the belief or judgment of rightness applies primarily to the act, and not to the motive that prompts us to it. At the same time, we generally include in our notion of "conscientiousness" the habit of reflecting on motives, and judging them to be good or bad. And this kind of judgment does not exactly correspond to our judgment of the acts to which they prompt: for we think that a good act may be done from a bad motive and *vice versâ*. It is necessary, therefore, in order to complete our examination of the Intuitional Method, to consider this comparison of motives, and ascertain how far it can be made systematic, and pursued to conclusions of scientific value.

And this seems a convenient place for treating of this part of the subject. For it has been maintained by an important school of English moralists that Desires and Affections rather than Acts are the proper subjects of the ethical judgment: and it is natural to fall back upon this view when systematic reflection on the morality of Common Sense has

shewn us the difficulty of obtaining a precise and satisfactory determination of rightness and wrongness in external conduct.

To avoid confusion, it should be remembered that the term "motive" is commonly used in two senses. It is sometimes applied to the end aimed at in an action, especially if that end be pleasure of some kind: and sometimes to the conscious impulse or spring of action (whether called Appetite, Desire, or Affection) which precedes Volition. The two meanings are in a manner correspondent, as, where impulses are different, there must always be some sort of difference in their respective ends. But for our present purpose we should take the latter meaning: as it is our own impulsive nature that we have practically to deal with, in the way of controlling, resisting, indulging the different impulses: and therefore it is the ethical value of these that we are primarily concerned to estimate. And we often find that two impulses, which would be placed very wide apart in any psychological list, are directed towards an end materially identical, though regarded from a different point of view in each case. As (e.g.) both appetite and Rational self-love may impel a man to seek a particular sensual gratification: though in the latter case it is regarded under the general notion of pleasure, and as forming part of a sum called Happiness. In this chapter then I shall use the term Motive to denote the kind of consciousness which precedes and—at least partially—determines volition.

The first point to notice in considering the ethical result of a comprehensive comparison of motives is, that the issue in any internal conflict is not usually thought to be between positively good and bad, but between better and less good, more or less estimable or elevated motives. The only kind of motive which we commonly judge to be *intrinsically* bad, apart from the circumstances under which it operates, is malevolent affection: that is, the desire, however aroused, to inflict pain on some other sentient being. And it is perhaps doubtful, (as we saw in ch. 8,) whether even this impulse ought to be pronounced absolutely bad. Butler allows it to be legitimate in the forms of Instinctive Resentment: and even a more sustained and deliberate malevolence is commonly approved as Righteous Indignation: and if it be said that

this Indignation ought to be directed against the act and not the agent, it may be fairly questioned whether it is within the capacity of human nature to maintain this distinction clearly[1]. At any rate there is no other motive except deliberate malevolence which Common Sense condemns as absolutely bad. The other motives that are commonly spoken of in "dyslogistic" terms seem to be more properly called (in Bentham's language) "Seductive" rather than bad. That is, they prompt to forbidden conduct with conspicuous force and frequency: but when we consider them in themselves we find that there are certain limits, however narrow, within which their operation is legitimate.

If then all kinds of motives, with one doubtful exception, are, considered abstractly, at least indifferent and allowable, it remains for the moralist to determine their comparative goodness or rank in the scale of impulses.

A distinguished living writer[2] maintains that whenever two different springs of action come into conflict, their comparative goodness is recognised by immediate intuition: and that such intuitions are the ultimate premises upon which all valid moral reasoning depends. I will give in his own words his very clear and complete exposition of this doctrine.

"We think that, in common with the inferior animals, we are created with certain determinate propensities to particular ends, or with provisions for the development of such propensities: that in the lower animals, these operate singly and successively, each taking its turn for the command and guidance of the creature, and none of them becoming objects of reflection; that in us also this instinctive impulse is the original type of activity, and would perhaps become permanent in a solitary human being, or in a mind with only one propension at a time: but that with us the same occasion calls up simultaneously two or more springs of action; that immediately on their juxta-position we intuitively discern the higher quality of one than another, giving it a divine and

[1] Perhaps we ought to distinguish the impulse to inflict pain from the desire of the antipathetic pleasure which the agent will reap from this infliction, and approve the former in certain circumstances, but condemn the latter absolutely.

[2] The Rev. J. Martineau: in a review of Whewell's *Elements of Morality*.

authoritative right of preference; that when the whole series of springs of action has been experienced, the feeling or 'knowledge with ourselves' of their relative rank constitutes the individual conscience: that all human beings, when their consciousness is faithfully interpreted, as infallibly arrive at the same series of moral estimates as at the same set of rational truths: that it is no less correct therefore to speak of a universal conscience than of a universal reason in mankind: and that on this community of nature alone rests the possibility of ethical science." If then a table of springs of action be drawn up in the order of their natural ranks, "the obligatory value of every action is found by the following rule: 'every action is *right* which, in the presence of a lower principle, follows a higher; every action is *wrong* which, in the presence of a higher principle, follows a lower.'"

Mr Martineau has not, as far as I am aware, anywhere put forward such a table or scale of motives. But the English moralists of the last century who adopted the Emotional (as distinct from the Rational) form of Intuitionism were naturally led to arrangement of impulses on a principle similar to his. A rudimentary classification of this sort was attempted by Shaftesbury: and his disciple, Hutcheson, developed this into a more complete and elaborate system, to which I shall presently refer. First, however, I must repeat what was before said, that it seems to me a distinct divergence from Common Sense to take this judgment on *motives* as the primary and paramount exercise of the moral faculty. I must think that we all more commonly pass judgment upon acts, presuming them of course to be intended, and no doubt including motives to a certain extent in the object judged. It may be admitted that in many instances our judgment, though ostensibly referring to the acts, is really determined by our representation of certain motives that prompted the acts: but yet this is not the case always nor entirely, for we certainly think that bad acts may be done from a good motive, and right acts from a wrong one. Nor does it seem to me probable that in the development of the individual mind, this reflective comparison of impulses was historically the first form in which the moral intuition appeared: on the contrary, the introspective attitude

of mind, in which attention is concentrated on motives, seems comparatively rare in childhood, and only becomes easy and familiar at a later period.

§ 2. At the same time, this comparison of motives, though neither the earlier nor the more ordinary form of the moral judgment, might still give the true and final method: and might approve itself as such by the systematic clearness and mutual consistency of the results to which it led, when pursued by different thinkers independently: and by its freedom from the puzzles and difficulties to which other forms of the Intuitional Method seem to be exposed.

But on examination it appears, on the one hand, that many (if not all) of the difficulties which have emerged in our investigation of the commonly received principles of conduct are reproduced in a different form when we try to arrange Motives in order of excellence: and on the other hand, such a construction presents difficulties peculiar to itself, and the attempt to solve these exhibits greater and more fundamental differences among Intuitive moralists, as regards Rank of Motive, than we found to exist as regards Rightness of Conduct.

In the first place, it has to be decided whether we are to include in our list the Moral Sentiments, or impulses towards different kinds of virtuous conduct. Hutcheson certainly gives some of these a place in his scale, as (e.g.) Candour, Veracity, Fortitude: and it is *primâ facie* necessary to include them, as such sentiments are observable as distinct and independent impulses in most well-trained minds, and we sometimes recognise their existence in considerable intensity, as when we speak of a man being "enthusiastically brave," or "intensely veracious," or "having a passion for Justice." At the same time their admission places us in the following dilemma. Either the objects of these impulses are represented by the very notions that we have been examining—in which case, after we have decided that the impulse is better than its rival, all the perplexities set forth in the previous chapters will recur, before we can act on our decision: for what avails it to recognise the superiority of the impulse to do justice, if we do not know what it is just to do?—or if in any case the object which a moral sentiment prompts us to realize is conceived more simply, with-

out the qualifications which a complete reflection on Common Sense forced us to recognise—then, as the previous investigation shews, we shall certainly not find agreement as to the relation between this and other impulses. For example a dispute, whether the impulse to speak the truth ought or ought not to be followed, will inevitably arise when Veracity seems opposed either to the general good, or to the interests of some particular person; that is, when it conflicts with "particular" or "universal" benevolence. Now, we find that Hutcheson places these latter impulses in a higher rank than Veracity and the others above mentioned. But as this view coincides practically with Utilitarianism[1], it will of course be repudiated by Intuitional moralists generally.

Mr Martineau seems disposed to escape all perplexity of this kind by denying the independent existence of the moral impulses proper. He says that "when we have run over in fancy all the sorts of *natural* good appropriate to the appetites, the understanding, the imaginations, the affections, we come to a stop, and can form no notion of an extrinsic lot of good, over and above these, under the name of *moral* good. Between Virtue and a good dinner, or virtue and a full purse, we never experienced a rivalry," &c. But this only brings out more impressively the extreme divergence of the results to which his method leads as used by different thinkers. For moralists of a Stoical cast (such as Kant) regard all actions as bad—or not good—which are not done from pure Regard for the Moral Law, Desire to do Right as Right. And Hutcheson, who represents the opposite pole of Intuitional Ethics, still distinguishes this impulse; and treats it as at once coordinate in rank and coincident in its effects with Benevolence. How are we to deal with these disagreements? Again, in estimating the ethical value of the impulse which Butler, and English moralists after him, have called Self-love, we find similar fundamental differences. For Butler seems to regard it as one of two superior and naturally authoritative impulses, the other being Conscience: nay, in a passage before quoted, he even concedes that it would be

[1] The difference between such a system as Hutcheson's and modern Utilitarianism is chiefly that the latter values the result attained, and the former the feeling that prompts to its attainment.

reasonable for Conscience to yield to it, if the two could possibly conflict. Others seem to place this among virtuous impulses under the name of Prudence: though perhaps among these they always rank it rather low, and would have it yield, in case of conflict, to nobler virtues. Others, again, exclude it from Virtue altogether: e.g. Kant says that the end of Self-love, our own happiness, cannot be an end for the Moral Reason; that the force of the reasonable Will, in which Virtue consists, is always exhibited in resistance to natural egoistic impulses.

How, then, shall we settle these controversies? For it is scarcely open to us to evade them in Mr Martineau's way by denying the existence of moral impulses, as distinct from the natural desires between which comparison is made in the moral judgment. Certainly, I and other moralists distinguish the former as independent impulses in our nature as it is at present formed: both the central desire to do Right as such, and the love and admiration of special virtues, as Veracity, Courage, Justice, spurring us to realize these in conduct. Nor does it seem relevant to urge that the moral impulses are posterior in time to, and derivative from, more elementary impulses: for even if this be true, still, when once a derivative impulse has become so far independent of its antecedents that conflict between them is possible, there is the same practical need of estimating the ethical value of the former relatively to the latter, as there is of determining the mutual relations of the latter. And, as we have seen, the assumption that "original" impulses, as such, have any prior claim to consideration in morals, is not only arbitrary but opposed to our general view of development: not to say that the ascertainment of the "original" or "elementary" character of any impulse is a very difficult matter, and belongs to a very obscure and hypothetical region of psychology.

§ 3. But even if we put out of sight the Moral sentiments and Self-love, it is still scarcely possible to frame a scale of motives arranged in order of merit, for which we could claim anything like a clear consent, even of cultivated and thoughtful persons. On one or two points, indeed, we seem to be generally agreed; such as the inferiority of the bodily appetites to the

benevolent affections and the intellectual desires; and perhaps of all the impulses that tend primarily to the well-being of the individual as compared with those which we class as extra-regarding or disinterested. But beyond a few general statements of this kind, it is very difficult to proceed. For example, when we compare personal affections with the love of knowledge or of beauty, or the passion for the ideal in any form, much doubt and divergence of opinion become manifest. Indeed, we should hardly agree on the relative rank of the benevolent affections taken by themselves; for some would prefer the more intense, though narrower, while others would place the calmer and wider feelings in the highest rank. Or again, since Love, as we saw[1], is a complex emotion, and commonly includes, besides the desire of the good or happiness of the beloved, a desire for union or intimacy of some kind; some would consider an affection more elevated in proportion as the former element predominated, while others would regard the latter as at least equally essential to the highest kind of Affection. And, in fact, in the love of God, which many consider to be the most elevated of all emotions, the former element can hardly be included at all: for we can scarcely wish to make God better or happier.

Again, we may notice the love of Fame and the love of Power as important and widely operative motives, which would be ranked very differently by different persons: for some would place the former "spur that the clear spirit doth raise" among the most elevated impulses after the moral sentiments; while others think it degrading to depend for one's happiness on the breath of popular favour. And similarly as regards the love of Power: for the effects of this impulse are of nearly all degrees of goodness and badness, and we seem inclined to praise or blame it accordingly.

Hitherto I have assumed it to be a simple matter to ascertain by what motives one's actions are determined. But a consideration of the last-mentioned impulse, as treated by different writers, shews that this is sometimes very difficult. For while some scarcely recognise the love of Power at all, as distinct from the desire of Fame or of Superiority, others trace

[1] *Cf. ante*, c. IV. § 2.

its operation in almost every exercise of choice. Hobbes, for example, regards the benevolent impulse as being really the love of power in disguise: and Dugald Stewart considers that Avarice is a particular manifestation of it, and that the love of knowledge, of property, and of liberty, may be at least partly resolved into it. And reflection seems to shew that Stewart's view is sound, and that we must even admit a partial truth in the paradox of Hobbes: though in all these cases we can trace other elements in combination with the love of power, and it is often difficult to say how many such there are and which predominates. For the more we contemplate the actual promptings that precede any volition, the more we seem to find complexity of motive the rule rather than the exception, at least in the case of educated persons. And this much increases the difficulties of determining right conduct by comparison of motives. In the first place, in the obscurity of introspective analysis, we may easily miss some element, or mistake the predominant motive. But, secondly, from this composition of impulses there results a fundamental perplexity as to the principles on which our decision is to be made, even supposing that we have a clear view of the relative worth of the elementary impulses. For the compound will generally contain nobler and baser elements, and we can hardly get rid of the latter: for though we may frequently suppress and expel a motive by firmly resisting it, we seem powerless to exclude it if we do the act to which it prompts. Suppose, then, that we are impelled in one direction by a combination of high and low motives, and in another by an impulse that ranks between the two in the scale, how shall we decide which course to follow? Such a case is by no means uncommon: e.g. an injured man may be moved by an impulse of pity to spare his injurer, while a regard for justice and a desire of revenge combined impel him to inflict punishment. Or, again, a Jew of liberal views might be restrained from eating pork by a desire not to shock the feelings of his friends, and might be moved to eat it by the desire to vindicate true religious liberty combined with a liking for pork. How are we to deal with such a case as this? For it will hardly be suggested that we should estimate the relative proportions of the different motives and decide accordingly; even if

the values of the different motives could be reduced to a common standard. And if it be said that the highest motive present, however feeble compared with others, should always prevail, and that we need only attend to that: then this mode of determining right conduct seems practically to pass over and resolve itself into some more objective method. For if the virtuous impulses proper—desires to realize some particular external rule or ideal—are admitted as independent, these will naturally occupy the highest rank: and if not, then Rational Benevolence, or some similar principle, within the range of which all actions may be comprehended. And thus, when a conflict occurs between motives inferior to these, the inferior will naturally carry up the case, so to say, into the court of the higher motive; so that the practical issue will, after all, depend upon the determination of the object of the higher motive, whether it be conformity to moral rules or universal happiness and the means to this. And, in fact, such a reference seems continually to occur in our psychical experience: our lower impulses, bodily appetites, &c., when they conflict with some higher principle, continually impel us to justify them by considerations of their tendency to promote individual or general good. And thus our estimate of the value of all motives below the highest turns out to have little practical application, as the final decision as to the rightness of conduct will depend, after all, upon the consideration of its external effects.

But finally, even if we could satisfactorily arrange the relative rank of all concrete motives, it would still seem opposed to Common Sense to hold that the higher ought always to prevail over the lower: since it would lead to the conclusion that we ought to substitute the higher for the lower wherever this is possible, and so to that suppression of natural impulses in favour of Reason, which we commonly regard as a Stoical extravagance. For (as we saw in the last chapter[1]) there are many cases in which Common Sense seems to prefer that a lower motive should operate rather than a higher: and it shrinks from expelling any normal impulse—except perhaps malevolence—from human nature altogether, holding that the operation of each within due limits is necessary to the perfec-

[1] § 2.

tion of human life. And these limits, within which the higher motive ought not to supplant the lower, can only be determined by comparing the respective *effects* of different combinations and harmonies of motives: and thus we are brought back to that judgment of actions in their external aspect as right and wrong (or good and bad), for which this comparison of motives was proposed as a substitute.

CHAPTER XIII.

PHILOSOPHICAL INTUITIONISM.

§ 1. Is there, then, no possibility of attaining, by a more profound and discriminating examination of our common moral thought, to real ethical axioms—intuitive propositions of real clearness and certainty?

This question leads us to the examination of that third phase of the intuitive method, which was called Philosophical Intuitionism[1]. For we conceive it as the aim of a philosopher, as such, to do somewhat more than define and formulate the common moral opinions of mankind. His function is to tell men what they ought to think, rather than what they do think: he is expected to transcend Common Sense in his premises, and is allowed a certain divergence from Common Sense in his conclusions. It is true that the limits of this deviation are firmly, though indefinitely, fixed: the truth of a philosopher's premises will always be tested by the acceptability of his conclusions: if in any important point he be found in flagrant conflict with common opinion, his method will be declared invalid. Still, though he is expected to establish and concatenate at least the main part of the commonly accepted moral rules, he is not necessarily bound to take them as the basis on which his own system is constructed. We should expect, therefore, that the history of Moral Philosophy—so far at least as those whom we may call orthodox thinkers are concerned—would be a history of attempts to enunciate, in full breadth and clearness, those primary intuitions of Reason, which the common moral thought of mankind exhibits confusedly and incompletely, restricted to special applications, or latent in derivative rules.

[1] Cf. *ante*, B. I. ch. VIII. § 4.

And this is to some extent the case. But it would be so much more, if moral philosophers (especially in modern times) had not been occupied with so many other questions, distracting their attention from the theory of right conduct: such as the innateness of our notions of duty, the nature of the faculty that furnishes them, the ultimate answer to the question why we should do our duty, the harmony of duty and interest, and the mode of demonstrating it, &c. At the same time they have been hampered by the fear (not, as we have seen, unfounded) of losing the support given by "general assent" if they set before themselves and their readers too rigid a standard of scientific precision. And this has been especially the case since the reaction, led by Reid, against the manner of philosophising which culminated in Hume. For there is certainly some truth in the charge commonly made against Reid and his followers, though it has been urged, perhaps, too sweepingly and superciliously: that under their auspices Philosophy has abandoned its proper function of raising and developing Common Opinion into the higher state of knowledge, and condescended to flatter it into the belief that it is knowledge already. Still, in spite of all these drawbacks, we find that philosophers have provided us with a considerable stock of comprehensive moral propositions, put forward as certain and self-evident, and such as at first sight seem well adapted to serve as first principles in an ethical system.

§ 2. But here a word of caution seems required, which has been somewhat anticipated in earlier chapters, but on which it is particularly needful to lay stress at this point of our discussion: against a certain class of sham-axioms, which are very apt to offer themselves to the mind that is earnestly seeking for a philosophical synthesis of practical rules, and to delude the unwary with a tempting aspect of clear self-evidence. These are principles which appear certain and self-evident because they are substantially tautological: because, when examined, they are found to affirm no more than that it is right to do that which is, in a certain department of life, under certain circumstances and conditions—right to be done. No one who has not studied the history of moral philosophy can easily conceive the extent to which thinkers of repute have

acquiesced in tautologies of this kind, sometimes expanded into circular reasonings, sometimes hidden in the recesses of an obscure notion, often really lying so near the surface that, when once they have been pointed out, the solemn air with which they presented themselves becomes somewhat laughable.

Let us turn, for illustration's sake, to the time-honoured Cardinal Virtues. If we are told that the dictates of Wisdom and Temperance may be summed up in clear and certain principles, and that these are respectively,

(1) It is right to act rationally:

(2) It is right that the Lower parts of our nature should be governed by the Higher,

we do not at first feel that we are not obtaining valuable information. But when we find (cf. *ante*, ch. 11, § 2) that "acting rationally" is merely another phrase for "doing what we see to be right," and, again, that the "higher part" of our nature to which the rest are to submit is explained to be Reason, so that "acting temperately" is only "acting rationally" under the special condition of non-rational impulses needing to be resisted: the tautology of our "principles" is obvious. Similarly when we are gravely asked to accept as the principle of Justice "that we ought to give every man his own," the definition seems plausible—until it appears that we cannot define "his own" except as equivalent to "that which it is right he should have."

The definitions quoted may be found in modern writers: but it seems worthy of remark that almost all the ethical speculation of Greece (though in many respects of unsurpassed interest and value) is stricken with this incurable defect: such universal affirmations as it delivers concerning Right or Good conduct seem always to be propositions which can only be defended from the charge of tautology, if they are understood as definitions of the problem to be solved, and not as attempts at its solution. For example, we come to the study of Plato and Aristotle, expecting to find them great constructive moralists. They seem to tell us that they have supplied the scientific knowledge on ethical matters of which Socrates proclaimed the absence: knowledge, that is, of the Good and Bad in human life. And as to what this is, they seem to be in the main

agreed. It is true that Plato wishes us to understand that he has attained a knowledge of absolute abstract Good, of which the good that can be realized in the concrete life of men and communities is but an imperfect copy: and so far he is at issue with Aristotle. Still it is only with this latter, the good in human life, that we are now concerned: and both philosophers are agreed that this is chiefly Virtue, or (as Aristotle more precisely puts it) the *exercise* of Virtue. Therefore at least the practical part of ethical science must consist in the knowledge of Virtue. How, then, can we ascertain the kind of conduct which is properly to be called Virtuous? It seems that Plato can tell us no more of each virtue in turn than that it consists in the knowledge of what is Good in certain circumstances and relations, and such a harmony of the different elements of man's appetitive nature, that their resultant impulse may be always in accordance with this knowledge. But it is just this knowledge (or at least its principles and method) that we are expecting him to give us: and to explain to us instead the different exigencies under which we need it, in no way satisfies our expectation. Nor, again, does Aristotle bring us much nearer such knowledge by telling us that the Good in conduct is to be found somewhere between different kinds of Bad. This at best only indicates the *whereabouts* of Virtue: it does not give us a method for finding it.

On the Stoic system, as constructed by Zeno and Chrysippus, it is perhaps unfair to pronounce decisively, from the accounts given of it by adversaries like Plutarch, and such semi-intelligent expositors as Cicero, Diogenes Laertius, and Stobæus. But, as far as we can judge of it, we must pronounce the exposition of its general principles a complicated enchainment of circular reasonings, by which the inquirer is continually deluded with an apparent approach to practical conclusions, and continually led back to the point from which he set out.

The fundamental formula of Stoicism, the primary intuition upon which the system was based, seems to have been that declaring "Life according to Nature" to be the ultimate end of action. The spring of the motion that sustained this life was in the vegetable creation a mere unfelt impulse: in animals it was impulse accompanied with sensation: in man it was the

direction of Reason, which in him was naturally supreme over all merely blind irrational impulses. What then does Reason direct? "To live according to Nature" is one answer: and thus we get the circular exposition of ethical doctrine in its simplest form. Sometimes, however, we are told that it is 'Life according to Virtue:' which leads us into the circle already noticed in the Platonic-Aristotelian philosophy, as Virtue, by the Stoics also, is only defined as knowledge of Good and Bad in different circumstances and relations. Indeed, this latter circle is given by the Stoics more neatly and perfectly: for with Plato and Aristotle Virtue was not the *sole*, but only the *chief* content of the notion Good, in its application to human life: but in the view of Stoicism the two notions are absolutely coincident. The result, then, is that Virtue is knowledge of what is good and ought to be sought or chosen, and of what is bad and ought to be shunned or rejected: while at the same time there is nothing good or properly choice-worthy, nothing bad or truly formidable, except Virtue and Vice respectively. But if Virtue is thus declared to be a science that has no object except itself, the notion is inevitably emptied of all practical content. In order, therefore, to avoid this result and to reconcile their system with common sense, the Stoics explain that there were other things in human life which were in a manner preferable, though not strictly good, including in this class the primary objects of men's natural desires. On what principle then are we to select these objects when our impulses are conflicting or ambiguous? If we can get an answer to this question, we shall at length have come to something practical. But here again the Stoic could find no other general answer except either that we were to choose what was Reasonable, or that we were to act in accordance with Nature: each of which answers brings us back into the original circle at a different point[1].

In Butler's use of the Stoic formula, this circular reasoning seems to be avoided: but it is so only so long as the intrinsic reasonableness of right conduct is ignored or suppressed. Butler

[1] I must again observe that the above remarks would be of course grossly unfair, if offered as a complete estimate of the value of ancient systems of Ethics. But I am here only considering the value of the general principles that they profess to supply for determining what ought to be done.

assumes with his opponents that it is reasonable to live according to Nature, and argues that Conscience or the faculty that imposes moral rules is naturally supreme in man. It is therefore reasonable to obey Conscience. But are the rules that Conscience lays down merely known to us as the dictates of arbitrary authority, and not as in themselves reasonable? This would give a surely dangerous absoluteness of authority to the possibly unenlightened conscience of any individual: and Butler is much too cautious to do this: in fact, in more than one passage of the *Analogy*[1] he expressly adopts the doctrine of Clarke, that the true rules of morality are intrinsically reasonable. But if Conscience is, after all, Reason applied to Practice, then Butler's argument seems to bend itself into the old circle: 'it is reasonable to live according to Nature, and it is natural to live according to Reason.'

I might go on to shew that the notion of Perfection, as treated in the Wolfian system, leads inevitably to similar tautologies, more or less disguised: but the demonstration would have little interest for most of my readers; and I have already given, perhaps, more than sufficient illustration of one of the most important dangers that beset the student of Ethics. In the laudable attempt to escape from the doubtfulness, disputableness, and apparent arbitrariness of current moral opinions, he is liable to take refuge in principles that are incontrovertible but insignificant.

§ 3. Is there, then, any way between this Scylla and Charybdis of ethical inquiry, by which, avoiding on the one hand doctrines that merely bring us back to common opinion with all its imperfections, and on the other hand doctrines that lead us round in a circle, we may attain clear intuitive truths of substantial value? I believe that there is such a way: though we must be careful not to exaggerate the amount of the moral knowledge to which it conducts us. And I think we may find it by following the two thinkers who in modern times have most earnestly maintained the strictly scientific character of ethical principles: viz. Clarke in England, and Kant in Germany.

In studying Clarke, it is scarcely worth while to dwell much upon his statement of his general theory. It is soon manifest

[1] *Anal.* Pt. II. c. 1, and c. 8.

that his anxiety to exhibit the parallelism between ethical and mathematical truth, on which Locke before him had insisted, has too much influence upon his terminology, and leads him into extravagancies and absurdities. We will not therefore discuss whether "relations and proportions," "fitnesses and unfitnesses of things" are suitable designations for the content of moral intuition: or whether a man who "wilfully acts contrary to Justice" can be said to "will things to be what they are not and cannot be." Let us consider rather his exposition of the reasonableness of the particular ethical principles which he lays down.

Clarke holds that there are, in respect of our behaviour towards our fellow-men, two fundamental "rules of righteousness:" the first of which he terms Equity, and the second Love or Benevolence.

The Rule of Equity he states in two or three slightly different forms, of which the clearest and most unexceptionable seems to be this: "Whatever I judge reasonable or unreasonable that another should do for me; that by the same judgment I declare reasonable or unreasonable that I should *in the like case* do for him[1]."

This is a special application (restricted by the condition that our conduct is to affect others) of the principle laid down in ch. 1. It was there said that 'if we assert any action to be right, we imply that it would be right for all persons in precisely similar circumstances.' This principle was there treated as self-evident: and it certainly seems to me as much so as the axioms of mathematics, whether or not it be desirable to classify it with them. If an action that is right for me is not right for some one else, it must be on the ground of some difference between the two cases, other than the mere fact that I and he are different individuals. Clarke's principle is, of course, substantially the same as what is called the Golden Rule—"Do to others as you would they should do to you." It has to be observed, however, that this latter formula is inaccurate in statement: for we may easily wish for another's cooperation in sin and be willing to reciprocate it: but we cannot, as reasonable beings, judge it right for *A* to treat *B* in a manner in

[1] *Evidences*, &c. pp. 86, 87 (Edition of 1706).

which, under precisely similar circumstances, it would be wrong for *B* to treat *A*.

At the same time it must be allowed (what Clarke scarcely sees) that this principle is *primâ facie* insufficient for the complete determination of just or equitable conduct. As was pointed out in ch. 5, it excludes a particular kind of injustice, that which springs from conscious selfishness or 'respect of persons,' and secures an impartial application of all laws and rules: but it does not help us to decide what kind of rules should be thus impartially applied: what differences in the nature and circumstances of human beings are reasonable grounds of difference in the treatment of them. And the same may be said of the more general principle given in ch. 1. The prohibition against indulging any impulse which we should condemn other persons in similar circumstances for indulging, is valuable and important: but it does not seem to furnish a complete criterion of duty. The assumption that it is such leads, in fact, to the paradoxical conclusion, that all thoroughly conscientious persons must always act rightly.

Let us now turn to Clarke's "second branch of the Rule of Righteousness" with respect to our fellow-creatures, "universal Love or Benevolence." This he explains to be "a constant endeavouring to promote in general, to the utmost of our power, the welfare and happiness of all men." The obligation to this he exhibits as follows:—

"If there be a natural and necessary difference between Good and Evil: and that which is Good is fit and reasonable, and that which is Evil is unreasonable, to be done: and that which is the Greatest Good is always the most fit and reasonable to be chosen: then as the Goodness of God extends itself universally over all His works through the whole creation, by doing always what is absolutely best in the whole: so every rational creature ought in its sphere and station, according to its respective powers and faculties, to do all the Good it can to its fellow-creatures: to which end, universal Love and Benevolence is plainly the most certain, direct, and effectual means[1]."

Here again the reasoning of Clarke seems to me substantially sound: but in order to exhibit it as clear and cogent, con-

[1] p. 92.

siderable modification in form is needed. It must be distinctly explained that here, as in the case of Equity, we must start with some ethical judgment, in order that the rule may be proved: and, in fact, the process of reasoning is precisely similar in the two cases. There, an individual was supposed to judge that a certain kind of conduct was right and fit to be pursued by others towards him: and it was then shewn that he must necessarily conceive the same conduct to be right for all other persons in precisely similar circumstances: and therefore judge it right for himself, in like case, to adopt it towards any other person. Similarly here we are supposed to judge that there is something intrinsically desirable—some result which it would be reasonable for each individual to seek for himself, if he considered himself alone. Let us call this the individual's Good or Welfare: then what Clarke urges is, that the Good of any one individual cannot be *more* intrinsically desirable, *because it is his*, than the equal Good of any other individual. So that our notion of Ultimate Good, at the realization of which it is evidently reasonable to aim, must include the Good of *every* one on the same ground that it includes that of *any* one.

This seems to be as much a self-evident truth as the principle of Equity. The proposition, however, that Universal Benevolence is the right means to the attainment of universal good, requires the qualification given in ch. 5, that the end may not always be best attained by directly aiming at it. Rational Benevolence, like Rational Self-love, may be self-limiting: may direct its own partial suppression in favour of other impulses. With this qualification, Clarke's proposition can scarcely be denied[1].

§ 4. When we turn to Kant's system, we find that two propositions, substantially identical with those just examined, are propounded as the chief ultimate principles of conduct. The

[1] Clarke's statement of the "Rule of Righteousness with respect to ourselves" I pass over, because it is, as he states it, a derivative and subordinate rule. It is that we should preserve our being, be temperate, industrious, &c., *with a view to the performance of Duty:* which of course supposes Duty (i.e. the ultimate and absolute rules of Duty) already determined. It is no doubt a defect of Clarke's explanation that he treats this third rule as though it were coordinate with the other two. But I am not defending his system as a whole: only the substantial validity of his two principal axioms.

forms of Kant's philosophical thought are, however, very unlike those of Clarke's: and his view of the relation of the two principles differs from that above given: and, in fact, is not very easy to expound, as it does not appear quite the same in different passages of his writings. The second principle, of Universal Benevolence, is always exhibited as a deduction from the first (not, that is, in the narrower application in which Clarke gives it as a Rule of Equity, but in the more comprehensive form in which it was propounded in ch. 1): but the deduction is not always made in the same way. The one fundamental principle of Duty, according to Kant, is that whatever is right for any one person is right for all persons in similar circumstances. This he calls a "formal" principle, meaning that it is implied in the very notion of (objective) rightness. He throws it into an imperative form: "So act that the maxim of thy action shall be fit for Law Universal." Here we observe that the word "fit" is ambiguous: it may either mean that the maxim might conceivably be adopted by all persons in similar circumstances, or that one can sincerely desire its adoption. Kant himself notices the two phases or degrees in which his principle may be applied, and makes it the basis of a classification of duties. And in some places he obtains the rule of universal Benevolence by combining this principle in its second and more exclusive form with the desire for the kind services of others which (as he assumes) the exigencies of life will inevitably arouse in each individual. The maxim, he says, "that each should be left to take care of himself without either aid or interference," is one that we might *conceive* existing as a universal law: but it would be impossible for us to *will* it to be such. "A will that resolved this would be inconsistent with itself, for many cases may arise in which the individual thus willing needs the benevolence and sympathy of others[1]." Similarly elsewhere[2] he explains at more length that the Self-love which necessarily exists in every one involves the desire of being loved by others and receiving aid from them in case of need. We thus necessarily constitute ourselves an end for others [we think *they* ought to promote

[1] *Grundlegung*, p. 50 (Rosenkrantz).

[2] *Tugendlehre*, Einleit. § 8.

our Good]: and so, according to the fundamental principle that 'to moralize our actions we must universalize our maxim,' we must recognise the duty of making *their* happiness *our* end[1].

Now I cannot regard this reasoning as strictly cogent. In the first place, that every man in need wishes for the aid of others is an empirical proposition which Kant cannot know *à priori*. We can certainly conceive a man in whom the spirit of independence and the distaste for incurring obligations should be so strong that he would choose to endure any privations rather than receive aid from others. But even granting that every one, in the actual moment of distress, must necessarily wish for the assistance of others: still a strong man, after balancing the chances of life, may easily think that he and such as he have more to gain, on the whole, by the general adoption of the egoistic maxim; benevolence being likely to bring them more trouble than profit.

In other passages, however, Kant reaches the same conclusion by a different line of argument. He lays down that, as all action of rational beings is done for some end, there must be some absolute end, corresponding to the absolute rule before given—that our maxims should be "such as we could will to be law universal." This absolute end, prescribed by Reason necessarily and *à priori*, which is for all rational beings as such, can be nothing but Reason itself, or the Universe of Rationals: for what the rule inculcates is, in fact, that we should act as rational units in a universe of rational beings (and therefore on principles conceived and embraced as at least potentially universal). Or again, we may reach the same result negatively. For all particular ends at which men aim are constituted such by the existence of some particular need, appetite, or desire, impelling them to the particular object. Now we cannot tell *à priori* that any of these special impulses forms part of the constitution of all men: and therefore we cannot state it as an absolute dictate of Reason that we should aim at any such special object. If, then, we thus exclude all particular empirical ends, there remains only the principle that "all Rational beings as such are ends to each:" or, as Kant sometimes puts it, that "humanity exists as an end in itself."

[1] Cf. also *Tugendl.* § 30.

Now, says Kant, so long as I confine myself to mere non-interference with others, I do not positively make Humanity my end: my aims remain selfish, though restricted by this condition of non-interference with others. My action, therefore, is not truly virtuous: for Virtue is exhibited and consists in the effort to realize the end of Reason in opposition to mere selfish impulses. Therefore "the ends of the subject, which is itself an end, must of necessity be my ends, if the representation of Humanity as an end in itself is to have its full weight with me[1]," and my action is to be truly rational and virtuous.

Now this reasoning appears to me substantially identical with that which I gave above, as a development of Clarke's proof of Benevolence. That a rational being as such must be impelled by Reason to aim at all ends intrinsically good and desirable: and that he cannot regard the satisfaction of his own personal desires as intrinsically more desirable (as being his own) than the satisfaction of the desires of any other person: these were the main points of that proof, and appear also to constitute the substance of Kant's.

At the same time we cannot, I think, accept the form of Kant's argument. In the first place, the conception of "humanity as an end in itself" is perplexing: because by an End we commonly mean something to be realized, whereas "humanity" is, as Kant says, "a self-subsistent end." Indeed, there seems to be a sort of paralogism in the deduction of the principle of Benevolence by means of this conception. For the humanity which Kant maintains to be an end in itself is Man (or the aggregate of men) *in so far as rational*. But the subjective ends of other men, which Benevolence directs us to take as our own ends, depend upon and correspond to their *non-rational* impulses (as Kant, of all moralists, most earnestly maintains). And it is hard to see why, if man *as a rational being* is an absolute end to other rational beings, they must therefore adopt his subjective aims as determined by his non-rational impulses. Nor, indeed, does it seem that Reason prescribes that we should assist a man in realizing all his desires, if only they do not clash with the desires of others: for they may not tend towards what is best for himself.

[1] *Grundlegung*, p. 59.

§ 5. There are other points which it would be necessary to notice in criticizing the Kantian system generally. But I am now only concerned to dwell on the substantial validity of these two cardinal points in it: first, that nothing can be right for me which is not right for all persons in similar circumstances: and secondly, that I cannot regard the fulfilment of my desires, or my own happiness, as intrinsically more desirable (or more to be regarded by me as a rational end) than the equal happiness of any one else.

But now, of these two propositions, the first is a necessary postulate of *all* ethical systems, being an expression of what is involved in the mere conception of objective rightness and wrongness in conduct: while the second is the fundamental principle of that particular system which (in Book I.) we called Utilitarianism.

In Book I. the common antithesis between Utilitarianism and Intuitionism was seen to be somewhat unsatisfactory: since in any system of Ethics whatsoever there must be at least one ultimate principle: which, therefore, we concluded, must be known by Intuition: and in the case of Utilitarianism, the statement of "general happiness" as the ultimate standard of morality seemed to be of this nature. And it now turns out that we have been unexpectedly led to this intuition by a road very different from that by which Utilitarianism is commonly supposed to be attained: we have found it as the final outcome of philosophical Intuitionism, the final result of inquiry after really clear and self-evident ethical axioms, as conducted by philosophers who are commonly regarded as eminent examples of the Intuitional mode of thought.

It must be admitted that the thinkers who in recent times have taught the utilitarian system, have not usually exhibited the self-evidence of their first principle by means of the reasoning above given. Still, whenever they do offer a proof of this principle, it seems to involve some such reasoning, or at least to be logically incomplete without it. To illustrate this, let us consider the proof that Mill gives of the "principle of utility" in ch. 4 of his *Utilitarianism*.

"The only proof capable of being given that an object is visible, is that people actually see it. The only proof that

a sound is audible, is that people hear it: and so of the other sources of our experience. In like manner, I apprehend, the sole evidence it is possible to produce that anything is desirable, is that people do actually desire it.....No reason can be given why the general happiness is desirable, except that each person, so far as he believes it to be attainable, desires his own happiness. This, however, being a fact, we have not only all the proof which the case admits of, but all which it is possible to require, that happiness is a good: that each person's happiness is a good to that person, and the general happiness, therefore, a good to the aggregate of persons." He then goes on to shew that pleasure, and pleasure alone, is what all men actually do desire.

Now it must be borne in mind that it is as a "standard of right and wrong," or "directive rule of conduct," that the utilitarian principle is put forward by Mill. Hence, in giving as a statement of this principle that "the general happiness is *desirable*," he must be understood to mean (and his whole treatise shews that he does mean) that it is what each individual *ought* to desire, or at least to aim at realizing in action. The proof he offers of this is, that each one actually does desire his own happiness. But it may surely be objected that the natural immediate conclusion from this, on Mill's own method, is that Own Happiness, not Universal Happiness, is what each one ought to desire: the argument leads primarily to the principle of Egoistic instead of Universalistic Hedonism. And I can conceive no possible way of meeting this objection, except by exhibiting (in substantially the same manner as Clarke and Kant exhibit it) the necessary universality of the ultimate end, as recognised by Reason: by shewing that the fact "that I am I" cannot make *my* happiness intrinsically more desirable, more fit to be accepted by my reason as the standard of right and wrong in conduct, than the happiness of any other person.

Thus Utilitarianism appears as the final form into which a really scientific Intuitionism tends to pass. This view, however, requires one qualification of fundamental importance. In Mill's argument just noticed there were three steps, of which the first given is logically the last. In order that the greatest Happiness (in the strict hedonistic sense of "Maximum of Pleasure

minus Pain") of all taken together, may be seen to be the only rational ultimate end of conduct, he had to shew, first, that each man, naturally and normally, desires his own Happiness and nothing else. Next, the inference is made from the universal desiredness to the desirability of Happiness. Then, last of all, comes the proof that my own Happiness is not intrinsically more desirable than that of any one else. But in Book I. ch. 4 of this treatise it was argued that Happiness or Pleasure is not the only object that each for himself either actually desires or judges desirable. Therefore the hedonistic interpretation which Mill and his school give to the principle of Universal Benevolence, seems inadmissible when the principle is enunciated as a self-evident axiom. In thus enunciating it, we must use, as Clarke does, the wider terms "Welfare" or "Good," and say that each individual man, as a rational being, is bound to aim at the Good of all other men.

This brings us naturally to the question, What is "Good"? which, it seems, still remains to be determined.

And here, perhaps, I may seem to have laboriously executed one of those circles in reasoning before noticed. For this question, as we saw in ch. 9 of Book I., is the fundamental problem of Ethics stated in its vaguest and widest form: in the form in which we find it raised at the very outset of the history of moral philosophy, when the speculative force of the Greek mind first concentrated itself on Practice. And here when, at the end of a long and careful examination of the apparent intuitions with which Common Sense furnishes us, we collect the residuum of clear and definite moral knowledge which the operation has left, we find the same problem facing us. We seem to have done nothing: and in fact we have only evolved the suppression of Egoism, the necessary universality of view, which is implied in the mere form of the objective judgment 'that an end is good,' just as it is in the judgment 'that an action is right.'

Whatever I judge to be Good, I cannot reasonably think that it is abstractly and primarily right that I should have it more than another.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE SUMMUM BONUM.

§ 1. LET us, then, examine once more this notion of intrinsic or ultimate Good—Good *per se*, and not as means to any further end—as we find it in our common thought and discourse: and make a final attempt to ascertain its content. Whatever it is, Reason seems to declare that it cannot be *more* good or intrinsically desirable, as possessed by or realized in any individual, than as possessed by or realized in any other: and hence that it is its universal realization which we must state as the ultimate end of rational conduct (however much it may be practically right that each one should chiefly seek to realize it in his own case).

But what is it?

A large part, perhaps the majority, of mankind would reply that it is Happiness, or Pleasure without pain. And yet Common Sense certainly seems to judge things and actions to be good independently of—or at least out of proportion to—the pleasure actually derived from them: and many would unhesitatingly maintain the validity of some such judgments: (e.g.) we should commonly agree with Aristotle (and the pre-Christian world generally) that a heroic act of self-devotion is *good*, in some sense, for the individual agent, and what he for his own sake would reasonably desire to do, even though it involve a painful death in which any moral satisfaction accompanying the act is balanced by pain of greater intensity: and we should pass this judgment independently of any belief in a future state in which the agent will be compensated for such self-sacrifice: indeed, the excellence of the act seems to be tarnished if we conceive it to be done in view of a future reward. Similarly

many would judge a base act to be bad for the agent, apart from the pain of shame and other evils resulting from disgrace: indeed, they would say it was worse for him if he was insensible to disgrace. And, setting aside the notions of duty or honour, we seem often to judge one kind of existence to be intrinsically better than another, without reference to happiness. For, as Kant says[1], it may be plausibly doubted whether the cultivation of the intellect really tends to increase happiness: or the question may be raised more generally, whether the civilized man be really happier than the savage. Many persons feel themselves unable to decide these questions, and yet have no doubt that intellectual cultivation and civilization generally are goods, and that men are the better for having them.

What then is the content of this notion of Absolute or Intrinsic Good, in so far as it is not identified with happiness?

This question, though usually passed over in the common treatment of morality, still has to be answered in some way, before the account which we have given of the Morality of Common Sense can be considered complete. For what is most commonly offered as moral teaching, and what in the preceding chapters we have been employed in examining, is chiefly a doctrine of restraints and prohibitions: it tells us what we are to avoid, and within what limits we are to seek whatever is worthy to be sought: but what this latter is, it does not systematically instruct us, assuming rather that we know it already. For instance, in the common exposition of Prudence and Benevolence, as the duties of seeking our own good and that of others, it is implied that we know what this "good" is. But if, as appears, we are not all agreed as to what it is, and do not all assent to the prevalent opinion that it is Happiness, or the sum of such feelings as, at the time that they are felt, are immediately known to be intrinsically desirable: then we clearly require a doctrine of the Good, or of Rational Ends, to supplement the doctrine of Rational Rules which current morality offers. A Stoic, indeed, might say that the True Good is Virtue, or Perfect fulfilment of Duty, and nothing else: and such a statement seems often to win a hasty assent from many who are not Stoics: but when steadily contemplated it must appear a paradox which

[1] *Grundlegung*, § 1.

Common Sense would certainly repudiate. For though the majority of moral persons would probably declare that Virtue is the *chief* good: very few would maintain that the *only* thing in life intrinsically desirable is the habit of obeying moral rules: and it would seem absurd to say that this is the sole good which the precept of Benevolence, as commonly recognised, bids us confer upon others.

But if it is not Happiness, nor merely Morality, what then is it?

This question was discussed to some extent in c. 9 of Book I. It there appeared that we could not, on reflection, maintain anything to be intrinsically and ultimately good, except in so far as it entered into relation to consciousness of some kind and rendered that good and desirable: and thus that the only ultimate Good, or End in itself, must be Goodness or Excellence of Conscious Life. All external material things which are commonly judged to be good are clearly thought to be so, either because they are useful to man, or as objects of contemplation by him: and the same is true even of excellences of the human body: and it seems true also of ideal goods, such as Truth, Beauty, &c.: what appears to us, on reflection, to be really good is the existence of conscious minds apprehending Truth and Beauty. And similarly the Virtue that we conceive as an End in itself must be Virtue in act, Virtue realized in Conduct: and not virtues only but all graces and gifts, talents and skills, all the permanent qualities of mind which we commonly admire and recognise as excellent, turn out to be really only potentialities to which conscious action and feelings are the correspondent actualities.

But now, when we have so far limited the application of the notion Good to conscious life, it may seem that our result is really identical with what we call Happiness. For Happiness was explained to be preferable or desirable feeling or consciousness: and if we say that all other things called good are only means to the end of making conscious life intrinsically better or more desirable, is not this saying that they are means to the end of happiness? On the other hand it seems clear that in ordinary thought consciousness, active and passive, is conceived to be preferable on other grounds than its pleasantness. This

point was briefly discussed in Book II. c. 2, § 2. It was there explained that when we judge one kind of consciousness to be more pleasant than another, we judge it to be preferable considered merely as feeling, without taking into account the conditions under which it is felt; but when we judge it to be better though less pleasant, what we really prefer is no longer the feeling itself, but something in its conditions, concomitants or consequences. Thus in the case of actions, we may prefer the external results of one action to those of another, although, if we considered merely the effects of the two on our own feelings, our choice would be reversed: and similarly, in comparing two kinds of passive feeling we may take into account the different relations to other persons or things or permanent objects of thought from which they are respectively inseparable, and our preference may be modified accordingly.

Let us take as illustrations some of these ideal objects, for the sake of which it is at least not obviously unworthy of a rational being to sacrifice human happiness. We may prefer the mental state of apprehending truth to the state of half-reliance on generally accredited fictions[1], although, if the fiction be pleasant, the former state may be more painful than the latter: and such preference may be independent of any effect which we expect either state to have upon our subsequent consciousness. Here, on my view, the real object of preference is not the consciousness of knowing truth, considered merely as feeling, because the element of pleasure or satisfaction in this is more than outweighed by the concomitant pain: but the relation between the mind and something else, which is whatever it is independently of our cognition of it. This may become more clear if we imagine ourselves learning afterwards that what we took for truth is not really so: for in this case we should certainly feel that our preference had been mistaken: whereas if our choice had really been between two kinds of feeling, its reasonableness could not be affected by any subsequent change of belief.

Similarly, a man may prefer freedom and penury to a life of luxurious servitude, not because the pleasant feeling of being free outweighs in prospect all the comforts and securities that

[1] Cf. Lecky, *Introduction*, pp. 52 seqq.

the other life would afford, but because he has a predominant aversion to that relation between his will and the will of another which we call slavery. Here, too, he may perhaps be led to regard his preference as mistaken, if he be afterwards persuaded that there is no such thing as Freedom: that we are all slaves of circumstances, destiny, &c.

Again, one may believe that what pleases one most among works of art is not really the most beautiful, and may prefer the contemplation of the latter to that of the former, as a more elevated exercise of taste.

Other examples might be taken without introducing the common antithesis between Duty and Pleasure. But this is of course the most obvious case of the preference of one mental state as better though less pleasant than another. And here again what the virtuous agent prefers seems to be the relation of his conscious act to some law or ideal represented as objective: and not the emotion that accompanies his cognition of this relation.

§ 2. If such objects, then, as Truth, Freedom, Beauty, Virtue, &c., or, strictly speaking, the objective relations of conscious minds which we call cognition of Truth, contemplation of Beauty, Independence of action, Realization of Virtue, &c., are Good, independently of the pleasure that we derive from them, it must be reasonable to aim at these for mankind generally and not at happiness only: and so the principle of Rational Benevolence, which was stated in the last chapter as an indubitable intuition of the practical Reason, does not seem to direct us to a mere pursuit of universal happiness.

But can this, on reflection, be maintained? It seems to me that it certainly cannot. Here I can only appeal to the intuitive judgment of each reader, when the question is fairly placed before it. For my own part, if I have any intuition at all respecting the ultimate ends of action, it seems to me that I can see this: that these objective relations of the conscious subject, when distinguished in reflective analysis from the consciousness accompanying and resulting from them, are not ultimately and intrinsically desirable: any more than material or other objects are, when considered out of relation to conscious existence altogether. Admitting that we have actual experience of such

preferences as have just been described, of which the ultimate object is something that is not Feeling: it still seems to me that when such objects are conceived to come, not apparently or transiently, but really and finally, into competition with Happiness, we cannot maintain the rationality of such preferences.

At the same time it must be allowed that we find in Common Sense an aversion to admit Happiness (when explained to mean a sum of pleasures) to be the sole ultimate end and standard of right conduct. But this, I think, can be fully accounted for by the following considerations.

I. The term Pleasure is not commonly used so as to include clearly *all* feelings which we desire to retain or reproduce: in ordinary usage it suggests too prominently the coarser and commoner kinds of such feelings: and it is difficult even for those who are trying to use it scientifically to free their minds altogether from the associations of ordinary usage, and to mean by Pleasure only Preferable or Desirable Feeling of whatever kind. Again, our knowledge of human life continually suggests to us instances of pleasures which will inevitably involve as concomitant or consequent either a greater amount of pain or a loss of more important pleasures: and we naturally shrink from including even hypothetically in our conception of ultimate good these—in Bentham's phrase—"impure" pleasures, especially since we have, in many cases, moral or æsthetic instincts warning us against such pleasures.

II. We have seen[1] that many important pleasures can only be felt on condition of our experiencing desires for other things than pleasure. Thus the very acceptance of Pleasure as the ultimate end of conduct involves the practical rule that it is not always to be made the conscious end. Hence, even if we are considering merely the good of one human being taken alone, excluding from our view all effects of his conduct on others, still the reluctance of Common Sense to regard pleasure as the sole thing ultimately desirable may be justified by the consideration that we shall be less happy if we are exclusively occupied with the desire of happiness. E.g. (as was before shewn) we shall miss the valuable pleasures which attend the

[1] Book I. c. 4, cf. Book II. c. 3.

exercise of the benevolent affections if we do not experience genuinely disinterested impulses to procure happiness for others (which are, in fact, implied in the notion of "benevolent affections").

III. But again, as was expounded in the preceding chapter, disinterested benevolence is not only thus generally in harmony with rational Self-love, but also in another sense and independently rational: that is, Reason shews me that if my happiness is desirable and a good, the equal happiness of any other person must be equally desirable. Now, when Happiness is spoken of as the sole ultimate good, the idea that is perhaps most commonly suggested is that each individual is to seek his own happiness at the expense (if necessary) or, at any rate, to the neglect of that of others: and this offends both our sympathetic and our rational regards for others' happiness. It is, in fact, rather the end of Egoistic than of Universalistic Hedonism, to which Common Sense feels an aversion. And certainly one's individual happiness is, in many respects, an unsatisfactory mark for one's supreme aim, apart from any direct collision into which the exclusive pursuit of it may bring us with rational or sympathetic Benevolence. It does not possess the characteristics which, as Aristotle says, we "divine" to belong to the Highest Good: being (so far, at least, as it can be empirically foreseen) so narrow and limited, of such necessarily brief duration, and so shifting and insecure while it lasts. But Universal Happiness, desirable conscious life for the innumerable multitude of living beings, present and to come, seems an End that satisfies our imagination by its vastness, and sustains our resolution by its comparative permanence and security.

And we certainly, in the great majority of cases in which we naturally judge an act to be good though painful to the agent, believe that it will be productive of happiness to human beings generally: and even when its "felicific[1]" tendency is not at first apparent, it may be made clear on further consideration: and even when no proof of this is possible, reflection will often discover a latent conviction that the act

[1] It will be convenient to use the terms 'felicific' and 'infelicific' for 'productive of happiness' and the reverse.

has such a tendency, so that we are not really judging the act to be good *although* we think it infelicific. It may perhaps be objected that this still does not explain why we should judge conduct to be good *for an individual* which is infelicific *relatively to him.* But if it is felicific on the whole, it is a means to the ultimate end of Reason, or Absolute Good (on the theory that identifies this with happiness), and therefore it must be, in a sense, reasonable for him to aim at it: although from another point of view his own happiness seems to be a rational ultimate end. Thus the judgment, that such conduct on his part as conduces to general good must be good *for him*, may be attributed partly to a certain confusion of thought between these two points of view, and partly to a faith deeply rooted in the moral consciousness of mankind, that there cannot be really and ultimately any conflict between the two kinds of reasonableness[1]. But if we simplify the question by supposing only a single sentient conscious being in the universe, it then is surely evident that nothing can be ultimately 'good' for such a being except his own happiness.

IV. But lastly, from the universal point of view no less than from that of the individual, it seems true that Happiness is likely to be better attained if the extent to which we set ourselves consciously to aim at it be carefully restricted. And this not only because action is likely to be more effective if our effort is temporarily concentrated on the realization of more limited ends—though this is no doubt an important reason:—but also because the fullest development of happy life for each individual seems to require that he should have other external objects of interest besides the happiness of other conscious beings. And thus we may conclude that the pursuit of the ideal objects before mentioned, Truth, Freedom, Beauty, &c., *for their own sakes*, is indirectly and secondarily, though not primarily and absolutely, rational: on account not only of the happiness that will result from their attainment, but also of

[1] We may illustrate this double explanation by a reference to some of Plato's dialogues, such as the *Gorgias*, where the ethical argument has a singularly mixed effect on the mind. Partly, it seems to us more or less dexterous sophistry, playing on a confusion of thought latent in the common notion of good: partly a noble and stirring expression of a profound moral faith.

that which springs from their disinterested pursuit. Though none the less when (to use Butler's phrase) "we sit down in a cool moment," we can only justify to ourselves the importance that we attach to any of these objects by considering its conduciveness, in one way or another, to the happiness of conscious beings. And if I ask for a final criterion of the comparative value of the different objects of men's enthusiastic pursuit, and of the limits within which each may legitimately engross the attention of mankind, I cannot but conceive it to depend upon the degree in which they respectively possess this "felicific" quality.

And thus we are finally led to the conclusion (which at the close of the last chapter seemed to be premature) that the Intuitional method rigorously applied yields as its final result the doctrine of pure Universalistic Hedonism.

§ 3. If, however, this view be rejected, it remains to consider whether we can frame any other consistent account of the contents of the notion of Good. If there be some objective constitution of the relations of conscious beings to each other and to the universe generally, which is desirable in itself and not merely as a means to the end of happiness, and which we may conceive, under the notion of Perfection, as something distinct from happiness—how shall we ascertain what it is? On what principle shall we harmonize or select among the different opinions that are current respecting it?

It is clear that this question reproduces all the difficulties which were exhibited in the earlier chapters of this book, and adds a host of fresh ones. For, as we have seen, among these objective relations commonly judged to be good, Virtue, or the relation of Conscious agents to the moral Law or Ideal, always occupies a prominent place. And thus we are forced to take up again that attempt to interpret with precision the commonly accepted notions of Virtue, which led us into so long a series of perplexities.

It is true that there is not the same obvious need of definiteness and exactness in our view of any virtue, when we consider it as a Good to be attained, and not as the source of a primary maxim of strict duty. For though Common Sense recognises a general duty of seeking to realize all kinds of

excellence, still the degree to which each is to be sought is left vague and indeterminate: and so when two virtues—such as Veracity and Benevolence—come into apparent conflict, we may attain a kind of Good by conforming our conduct to either. Still, when we introduce the notion of quantity and aim at realizing the 'greatest good,' we require to know in any case which alternative is to be preferred. And thus all the perplexities of the previous discussion return upon us, increased by our having to consider in each case the wider and more indefinite scope of an Excellence as distinct from a Duty. We have to observe, too, that further difficulties emerge at this point; of which we caught a glimpse in the previous discussion, where, however, it was not necessary to give them prominence. For example, what was prescribed under the head of Benevolence was primarily to "do good" to persons in various circumstances and relations. Now it seemed in accordance with Common Sense to interpret 'Good,' in this connexion, as equivalent to Happiness. But if we finally decide that Ultimate Good includes many things distinct from Happiness, and among these Virtue, then our explanation of Benevolence has involved a notion which in its turn involves that which it has been used to explain. Again, we noticed that a reference to 'utilitarian considerations' was in many cases suggested by Common Sense as the only mode of removing the ambiguities of current moral formulæ: but it must be allowed that as made by Common Sense the reference is rather to the "general good" than to the "general happiness;" so that if Good is to include Virtue as distinct from happiness, the explanation is again entangled in a vicious circle.

And it is to be observed, that in the present inquiry we need an especially clear and precise conception of Virtue: for we have not only to compare virtues among themselves, and to find a criterion for deciding which of two virtues is to be preferred when their maxims appear to conflict: but we have also to compare Virtue with other commonly recognised goods, such as Truth, Beauty, &c. Are we to seek Virtue first and everything else only in so far as it is a means to, or at least not incompatible with, the greatest possible realization of Virtue? Or may we hold with Aristotle that pure speculation

is the noblest life, and that though we must be virtuous in so far as we are practical, it is yet best to reduce the practical side of our life to a minimum? And so as regards devotion to Beauty, and the artist's life. Is art to be prosecuted for its own sake, or only as a means of developing virtue? And if for its own sake, how far? and to what extent is it reasonable that devotion to Beauty should draw us away from the service of Virtue? And similarly of the religious life: for though Common Sense holds that this is to some extent desirable for all, still the attitude of worship and religious contemplation may be maintained to a degree incompatible with practical activity: we have then to consider how far it is a good in itself, and how far practical virtue is to be sacrificed to it.

These difficulties are sometimes evaded by saying that each man has his own special gifts and capabilities, and must cultivate and develope these. But it has been already seen[1] that there is, as far as we can ascertain, no such definite original constitution in each human being as this seems to imply. If, however, we admit that the conception of excellent or perfect life has properly a different meaning for each individual, our difficulties are only multiplied. We cannot say that that is best which appears to each best: for we saw it to be characteristic of our judgments respecting Perfection or Excellence (as contrasted with those respecting Happiness), that we do not regard the judgment of each individual as final so far as his own state is concerned. Such judgments we commonly pass on others as well as ourselves, and accuse each other of error when we disagree. Hence in so far as the ideal of life varies for each individual, it is thought to vary on grounds intrinsically universal, so that all the various results are deducible from some universal principles that all ought to accept. We are thus led back to the question, What are these principles?

Finally, if we could obtain a clear and consistent notion of Objective Good, we should still have to solve the problem of deciding its relation to Subjective Good or Happiness. For Common Sense does not doubt that Happiness is a Good, and indeed most moral codes command us to seek it both for ourselves and for others. If, then, it is sometimes to be sacrificed

[1] B. II. c. 5.

for other sublimer goods, we want to be told clearly how far this sacrifice is to be carried.

I have failed to find any serious and systematic attempt to answer these questions: and hence I am forced to leave the ethical method which takes Perfection, as distinct from Happiness, to be the whole or chief part of ultimate Good, in a rudimentary condition. But if, on the one hand, we can get rid of this swarm of perplexities by interpreting Universal Good to mean Universal Happiness; if, as I have said, when we imagine a conscious being alone in the universe, it seems clear that only its own happiness could be to it an ultimate good; and if the impulse which has led moralists to reject the Hedonistic End can be satisfactorily explained by the considerations adduced in the preceding section; we may perhaps conclude that Common Sense will admit, as its most certain moral intuition most precisely stated, the First Principle of Utilitarianism.

BOOK IV.

UTILITARIANISM.

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER I.

THE MEANING OF UTILITARIANISM.

§ 1. THE term Utilitarianism is, at the present day, in common use, and is supposed to designate a doctrine or method with which we are all familiar. But on closer examination, it appears to be applied to several distinct theories, having no necessary connexion with one another, and not even referring to the same subject-matter. It will be well, therefore, to define, as carefully as possible, the doctrine that is to be denoted by the term in the present book: at the same time distinguishing this from other doctrines to which usage would allow the name to be applied, and indicating, so far as seems necessary, its relation to these.

By Utilitarianism is here meant the ethical theory, first distinctly formulated by Bentham, that the conduct which, under any given circumstances, is externally or objectively right, is that which will produce the greatest amount of happiness to all whose interests are affected: or more precisely (as under any given circumstances the interests of one or more may have to be sacrificed in order to secure the greatest happiness on the whole) the conduct which will produce the "greatest possible happiness to the greatest possible number." It would tend to clearness if we might call this principle, and the method based upon it, by some such name as "Universalistic Hedonism:" and I have therefore sometimes ventured to use this term, in spite of its cumbrousness.

The first doctrine from which it seems necessary to distinguish this, is that of Egoistic Hedonism, expounded and discussed in Book II. of this treatise. The difference, however, between the propositions (1) that each ought to seek his own happiness, and (2) that each ought to seek the happiness of all, is so obvious and glaring, that instead of dwelling upon it we seem rather called upon to explain how the two ever came to be confounded, or in any way included under one notion. This question, and the general relation between the two doctrines, were briefly discussed in a former chapter[1]. Among other points it was there noticed that the confusion between these two ethical theories was partly assisted by the confusion with both of the psychological theory that in voluntary actions every agent does, universally or normally, seek his own individual happiness or pleasure. Now there seems to be no *necessary* connexion between this latter proposition and any ethical theory: and in so far as this is a natural tendency to pass from psychological to ethical Hedonism, the transition must be—at least primarily—to the Egoistic phase of the latter. For clearly, from the fact that every one actually does seek his own happiness we cannot conclude, as an immediate and obvious inference, that he ought to seek the happiness of other people[2].

Nor, again, is Utilitarianism, as a doctrine of Duty and Virtue, necessarily connected with the theory (belonging to what may be called ethical psychology) that the moral sentiments are derived, by "association of ideas" or otherwise, from experiences of the non-moral pleasures and pains resulting to

[1] B. I. c. 6. It may be worth while to notice, that in Mill's well-known treatise on Utilitarianism this confusion, though expressly deprecated, is to some extent encouraged by the author's treatment of the subject. On p. 9, we find stated as the first principle of Utilitarianism "that actions are right and wrong in proportion as they tend to promote happiness." Now this statement does not distinguish Egoistic from Universalistic Hedonism: and the argument as continued for several pages would apply equally well to either system. It is not till we come to p. 16, that we are informed that "the standard is not the agent's own happiness, but the greatest amount of happiness altogether." Hence it is not surprising, though it is much to be regretted, that the most thoughtful opponents of Utilitarianism (as e.g. Mr Lecky) fail to distinguish properly between the two doctrines.

[2] I have already criticised (B. III. c. 13) the mode in which Mill attempts to exhibit this inference.

the agent or to others from different kinds of conduct. For, as was before observed[1], the question as to the authority of a moral principle cannot properly be settled by any investigation of its origin. These moral sentiments, however they may have been derived, are found in our present consciousness as independent impulses, and claiming authority over the more primary desires and aversions from which they are thought to have sprung: and one may admit to the fullest extent any theory of their derivation, and still hold with Butler that this natural (however derivative) claim is also reasonable, even when it apparently conflicts with the conclusions of the Utilitarian Calculus. While, on the other hand, the mere recognition and explanation of these sentiments, as facts of consciousness, does not necessarily affirm the ultimate and supreme authority either of the sentiments themselves or of the principle of Utilitarianism as above given. For it may still be held that these and all other impulses (including even Rational Benevolence) are properly under the rule of Rational self-love: and that it is really only reasonable to gratify them in so far as we may expect to find our private happiness in such gratification.

It appears, in short, that what is commonly called the Utilitarian theory of the origin of the moral sentiments, whether in the form in which it was held in the earlier school of associational psychologists, or as modified by the more recent doctrine of Evolution, is, strictly speaking, compatible with any of the three methods of determining right conduct, which it is the object of this treatise to investigate. At the same time, I do not mean to deny that this psychological theory has a place in the proof of Ethical Utilitarianism, though its importance in this relation seems to me to have been much exaggerated. What this place exactly is, I shall presently try to shew.

Finally, the doctrine that Universal Happiness is the ultimate standard must not be understood to imply that Universal Benevolence is the only right or best motive of action. For, as we have before observed, it is not necessary that the end which gives the criterion of rightness should always be the end at which we consciously aim: and if experience shews that the general happiness will be more satisfactorily attained if men

[1] B. III. c. 1, § 4.

frequently act from other motives than pure universal philanthropy—it is obvious that these other motives are reasonably to be preferred on Utilitarian principles.

§ 2. Let us now examine the principle itself somewhat closer. The ultimate end of action, as defined by it, is "the greatest possible happiness" of "the greatest possible number." The first of these notions, Maximum Happiness, we have already attempted (B. II. c. 1) to render as clear and definite as possible: and the results there obtained are of course as applicable to the discussion of Universalistic as to that of Egoistic Hedonism. We shall understand, then, that by Greatest Happiness is meant the greatest possible surplus of pleasure over pain, the pain being conceived as balanced against an equal amount of pleasure, so that the two mutually annihilate each other for purposes of ethical calculation. And of course, here as before, the assumption is involved that all pleasures are capable of being compared quantitatively with one another and with all pains: that every feeling has a certain intensive quantity, positive or negative (or, perhaps, zero), in respect of preferableness or desirableness, and that this quantity may be known: so that each may be weighed in ideal scales against any other. This assumption is involved in the very notion of Maximum Happiness: as the attempt to make "as great as possible" a sum of elements not quantitatively commensurable would be a mathematical absurdity. Therefore whatever weight is to be attached to the objections brought against this assumption (which was discussed in c. 3 of Book II.) must of course tell against the present method.

We have next to consider the notion of "greatest number," which also needs some further determination and explanation to render it sufficiently precise for scientific use. The first question which it suggests is, Number of what? Are we to include in our consideration all the beings capable of pleasure and pain whose feelings are affected by our conduct? or are we to confine our view to human happiness? The former view is the one adopted by Bentham and Mill, and (I believe) by the Utilitarian school generally: and seems obviously most in accordance with the universality that is characteristic of their principle. It is the Good *Universal*, interpreted and defined as

"happiness" or "pleasure," at which a Utilitarian considers it his duty to aim: and it seems arbitrary and unreasonable to exclude from the end, as so conceived, any pleasure of any sentient being.

It must, however, be admitted that by giving this extension to the notion, we considerably increase the scientific difficulties of the hedonistic comparison, which have already been pointed out (B. II. c. 3). For if it be difficult to compare the pleasures and pains of other men accurately with our own, a comparison of either with the pleasures and pains of the inferior animals is obviously still more obscure. Practically, Utilitarians have always concerned themselves almost entirely with *human* happiness: apparently assuming the comparative inferiority in intensity of the pleasure of other sentient beings. But even if we limit our attention to human beings, the notion of "greatest number" is not yet quite determinate. In the first place, it may be asked, How far we are to consider the interests of posterity when they seem to conflict with those of existing human beings? Perhaps, however, it is clear that the time at which a man exists cannot affect the value of his happiness from a universal point of view: and that the interests of posterity must concern a Utilitarian as much as those of his contemporaries, except in so far as the effect of his actions on the former must necessarily be more uncertain. But a further question arises when we consider that we can to some extent influence the number of future human (or sentient) beings. We have to ask how, on Utilitarian principles, this influence is to be exercised. Here, again, it seems clear that, supposing the average happiness enjoyed to remain the same, Utilitarianism directs us to make the number enjoying it as great as possible. But if we foresee as possible that an increase in numbers will be accompanied by a decrease in average happiness, or *vice versâ*, a difficulty arises which has not only never been formally noticed, but which seems to have been substantially overlooked by many Utilitarians. For example, political economists of the school of Malthus often appear to assume that no increase of numbers can be right which involves any decrease in average happiness. But if we take Utilitarianism to prescribe, as the ultimate end of action, happiness on the whole, and not any individual's

happiness, unless considered as an element of the whole, it would follow that, if the additional population enjoy on the whole positive happiness, we ought to weigh the amount of happiness gained by the extra number against the amount lost by the remainder. So that, strictly conceived, the point up to which, on Utilitarian principles, population ought to be allowed to increase, is not that at which average happiness is the greatest possible, but that at which the product formed by multiplying the number of persons living into the amount of average happiness reaches its maximum.

It may be well here to make a remark which has a wide application in Utilitarian discussion. The conclusion just given wears a certain air of absurdity to the view of Common Sense: because its show of exactness is grotesquely incongruous with our consciousness of the inevitable inexactness of all such calculations in actual practice. But, that our practical Utilitarian reasonings must necessarily be rough, is no reason for not making them as accurate as the case admits: and we shall be more likely to succeed in this if we keep before our mind as distinctly as possible the strict type of the calculation that we should have to make, if all the relevant considerations could be estimated with mathematical precision.

If, now, the statement of the Utilitarian principle may be regarded as sufficiently definite, we may proceed to consider how it is proved to be the true principle.

One more point, however, remains to be noticed. It is evident that there are many possible ways of distributing the same quantum of happiness among the same number of persons: in order, therefore, that the Utilitarian criterion of right conduct may be as complete as possible, we ought to know which of these ways is to be preferred. This question is often ignored in expositions of Utilitarianism. It has perhaps seemed somewhat idle, as suggesting a purely abstract and theoretical perplexity, that could have no practical exemplification: and no doubt, if all the consequences of actions were capable of being estimated and summed up with mathematical precision, we should probably never find the excess of pleasure over pain exactly equal in the case of two competing alternatives of conduct. But the very indefiniteness of all hedonistic calculations,

which was sufficiently shewn in Book II., renders it by no means unlikely that there may be no cognizable difference between the quantities of happiness involved in two sets of consequences respectively: the more rough our estimates necessarily are, the less likely we shall be to come to any clear decision between our alternatives. In all such cases, therefore, it becomes practically important to ask whether any mode of distributing happiness is better than any other. Now that the Utilitarian formula supplies no answer to this question has been already pointed out in our discussion of Justice (B. III. c. 5). In fact, in such cases there seems a need of supplementing the principle of seeking the greatest happiness of the greatest number by some principle of Just or Right distribution of the happiness among the number. The principle which most Utilitarians have either tacitly or expressly adopted is that of pure Equality: as given in Bentham's formula, "everybody to count for one, and nobody for more than one." And this principle seems the simplest, and the only one which does not need a special justification: for it seems reasonable to treat any one man in the same way as any other, if there be no reason apparent for treating him differently.

CHAPTER II.

THE PROOF OF UTILITARIANISM.

§ 1. In Book II., where we discussed the method of Egoistic Hedonism, we did not take occasion to examine any proof of its first principle: nor, in fact, is it commonly thought necessary to offer any such proof. And, again, in examining the Intuitional Method, we did not exactly demand demonstration of the principles put forward as intuitively known: but only inquired whether they possessed the characteristics which are found in other scientific axioms, and were really clear, self-evident, coherent and universally admitted. It may therefore be fairly asked why we should raise the question of Proof with respect to this third method alone. Here, however, it seems sufficient to reply that Common Sense insists upon raising it. It is a fact that while the principle of Egoism is unquestioningly accepted by the great majority of minds, and that of Intuitionism is at least openly challenged by few; Utilitarianism is generally felt to require some proof, or at least (as Mill puts it) some "considerations determining the mind to accept it." Few minds are prepared to admit as self-evident that one ought to aim at the greatest happiness of the greatest number; while the propositions "that it is reasonable for each individual to seek his own happiness," and "that it is reasonable to do what one sees to be one's duty," are scarcely questioned when they present themselves singly: and even when they are put side by side, and the possible conflict between them has become manifest, it is more common to attempt a settlement of the conflict by reconciling the two, than by subordinating or qualifying either.

No doubt plausible objections may be brought against each

of these principles. Why, it may be asked, should I aim at making my total of pleasure as great as possible? It has already been noticed that many minds have a certain aversion to this as a base and despicable aim: and this aversion cannot be entirely attributed to a confusion between the ordinary use of the term Pleasure and its scientific meaning: it remains even if Pleasure is made to include the highest and most refined kinds of preferable or desirable consciousness. It is felt that while to benefit mankind, to discover Truth, to realize Beauty in work or Virtue in conduct, is noble and sublime, the mere feeling of self-complacency which attends these achievements has nothing sublime in it. Thus many minds cling eagerly to that state of choice in which they prefer something else to their own feelings, and refuse to acquiesce in any other attitude[1].

And again it may be asked, from a quite different point of view, 'Why should I sacrifice a present pleasure for a greater one in the future? Why should I concern myself about my own future feelings any more than about the feelings of other persons?' And this question, we may observe, lies especially obvious to those who adopt the views of the extreme empirical school of psychologists, although these views are commonly supposed to have a close affinity with Egoistic Hedonism. If the unity of the Ego is really illusory, if the permanent identical 'I' is not a fact but a fiction, as Hume and his followers maintain: why should one part of the series of feelings into which the Ego is resolved be concerned with another part of the same series, any more than with any other series?

However, it undoubtedly seems to Common Sense paradoxical and absurd to ask for a reason why one should seek one's own happiness. It is an almost universal assumption that Self-love (or the desire for one's own happiness) has a legitimate authority over all particular appetites and passions, which as reasonable beings we are bound to recognise. That Conscience, or the faculty which discerns duty and prompts to its performance, has equally absolute authority is not so clear: we have seen that the superior validity of the dictates of Self-love, in case of irreconcileable conflict between the two impulses, is conceded

[1] I have before suggested a Utilitarian explanation of this. Cf. B. III. c, 14, § 8.

even by Butler. Still, though we cannot say that the question 'Why am I to do my duty?' is exactly paradoxical—as in fact it is a question which religious teachers and moralizers generally suppose to be asked, and to which it is the special claim of the great positive religions to supply an answer—yet, on the other hand, neither is Common Sense startled by the repudiation of the question as improper. When (e.g.) Dugald Stewart says[1] that "it is absurd to ask why we are bound to practise virtue," since "the very notion of virtue implies the notion of obligation," he is not thought to have uttered a paradox: and certainly, as a professed exponent of Common Sense, he was as far as possible from intending to utter one.

§ 2. But, however this may be, a similar position is not allowed to Utilitarians. Common Sense will not admit that the mere notion of Universal Happiness carries with it the recognition of an obligation to take this as an ultimate end of conduct. This obligation, accordingly, Utilitarians must submit to the necessity of proving.

It may be said, perhaps, that it is impossible to "prove" a first principle; and this is of course true, if by proof we mean a process which exhibits the principle in question as an inference from premises upon which it remains dependent for its certainty: for these premises, and not the inference drawn from them, would then be the real first principles. Nay, if Utilitarianism is to be *proved* to a man who already holds some other moral principles, whether he be an Intuitional or Common Sense moralist, who regards as final the principles of Truth, Justice, Obedience to authority, Purity, &c.; or an Egoist who regards his own interest as the ultimately reasonable end of his conduct: the process must be one which establishes a conclusion actually *superior* in validity to the premises from which it starts. For the Utilitarian prescriptions of duty are *primâ facie* in conflict, at certain points and under certain circumstances, both with Intuitional rules, and with the dictates of Rational Egoism: so that Utilitarianism, if accepted at all, must be accepted as overruling Intuitionism and Egoism. At the same time, if the other principles are not throughout taken as valid, the so-called proof does not seem to be addressed to the Intui-

[1] *Active and Moral Powers*, B. II. c. 6.

tionist or Egoist at all. How shall we deal with this dilemma? and how is such a process (certainly very different from ordinary proof) possible or conceivable? It seems that what is needed is a line of argument which on the one hand allows the validity, to a certain extent, of the principles already accepted, and on the other hand shews them to be imperfect,—not absolutely and independently valid, but needing qualification and completion.

Such a line of argument, addressed to Egoism, was given in ch. 13 of the foregoing book. It should be observed that the applicability of this argument depends on the manner in which the Egoistic first principle is formulated. If the Egoist strictly confines himself to stating his conviction that he ought to take his own happiness or pleasure as his ultimate end, there seems no opening for any line of reasoning to lead him to Universalistic Hedonism as a first principle. In this case all that the Utilitarian can do is to effect as far as possible a reconciliation between the two principles: by expounding to the Egoist the *sanctions* (as they are usually called) of rules deduced from the Universalistic principle: that is, the pleasures and pains that will accrue to himself from their observance and violation respectively. It is obvious that such an exposition has no tendency to make him accept the greatest happiness of the greatest number as his ultimate end: but only as a means to the end of his own happiness. It is therefore totally different from a *proof* (as above explained) of Universalistic Hedonism. When, however, the Egoist offers, either as a reason for his Egoistic principle, or as another form of stating it, the proposition that his happiness or pleasure is objectively desirable or Good; he gives the ground needed for such a proof. For we can then point out to him that *his* happiness cannot be more objectively desirable or more a good than the similar happiness of any other person: the mere fact (if I may so put it) that *he is he* can have nothing to do with its objective desirability or goodness. Hence, starting with his own principle, he must accept the wider notion of Universal happiness or pleasure as representing the real end of Reason, the absolutely Good or Desirable: as the end, therefore, to which the action of a reasonable agent as such ought to be directed.

But this line of argument is addressed to the Intuitionist also: in fact it was presented in ch. 13 of the preceding book as one of the few products of the Intuitional method which stood the test of rigorous criticism, and it was shewn that it occupied a prominent place in the exposition of Ethics by the most unqualified and confident advocates of this method[1]. Still, as addressed to the Intuitionist, this argument only exhibits the Utilitarian first principle as *one* moral axiom: it does not prove that it is *sole* or *supreme*. The premises with which the Intuitionist starts commonly include other formulæ held as independent and self-evident. Utilitarianism has therefore to exhibit itself in the twofold relation above described, at once positive and negative, to these formulæ. The Utilitarian must endeavour to shew to the Intuitionist that the principles of Truth, Justice, &c. have only a dependent and subordinate validity: arguing either that the principle is really only affirmed by Common Sense as a general rule admitting of exceptions and qualifications, as in the case of Truth, and that we require some further principle for systematizing these exceptions and qualifications: or that the fundamental notion is vague and needs further determination, as in the case of Justice; and further, that the different rules are liable to conflict with each other, and that we require some higher principle to decide the issue thus raised; and again, that the rules are differently formulated by different persons, and that these differences admit of no Intuitional solution, while they shew the vagueness and ambiguity of the common moral notions to which the Intuitionist appeals.

This part of the argument I have perhaps sufficiently developed, *aliud agens*, in the preceding book. But this line of reasoning taken by itself is, though effective, incomplete and scarcely adapted to produce perfect conviction. It has to be supplemented by developing the positive relation that exists between Utilitarianism and the Morality of Common Sense:

[1] I ought to remind the reader that the argument in ch. 18 only leads to the first principle of Utilitarianism, if it be admitted that Happiness would be the only thing ultimately and intrinsically Good or desirable for a conscious individual conceived as existing by itself. I afterwards in ch. 14 endeavoured to bring Common Sense to this admission.

by shewing how Utilitarianism sustains the general validity of the current moral judgments, and thus gives them a further justification, besides the intuitive recognition of their stringency: and at the same time affords a principle of synthesis, and a method for binding the unconnected and occasionally conflicting principles of common moral reasoning into a complete and harmonious system. If systematic reflection upon the morality of Common Sense thus exhibits the Utilitarian principle as that to which Common Sense naturally appeals for that further development of its system which this same reflection shews to be necessary; the proof of Utilitarianism will be as complete as it can be made.

CHAPTER III.

PROOF OF UTILITARIANISM (*continued*).

§ 1. It has been before observed (B. I. c. 6) that the two sides of the double relation in which Utilitarianism stands to the Morality of Common Sense have been respectively prominent at two different periods in the history of English ethical thought. Since Bentham we have been chiefly familiar with the negative or aggressive aspect of the former method. But as introduced by Cumberland, Utilitarianism was purely conservative. Cumberland is entirely occupied with shewing the general tendency of the received moral rules to promote the "common Good of all Rationals:" it never occurs to him to consider whether these rules as commonly formulated are in any way imperfect, and whether there are any discrepancies between such common moral opinions and the calculations of scientific Utilitarianism. So in Shaftesbury's system the "Moral" or "Reflex Sense" is supposed to be always pleased with that "Ballance" of the affections which tends to the good or happiness of the whole, and displeased with the opposite. In Hume's treatise this coincidence is drawn out more in detail, and with a more definite assertion that the perception of utility (or the reverse) is in each case the source of the moral liking (or aversion) which are excited in us by different qualities of human character and conduct. And we may observe that the most penetrating among Hume's contemporary critics, Adam Smith, admits unreservedly the objective coincidence of Rightness or Approvedness and Utility: though he maintains, in opposition to Hume, that "it is not the view of this utility

or hurtfulness, which is either the first or the principal source of our approbation or disapprobation." After stating Hume's theory that "no qualities of the mind are approved of as virtuous, but such as are useful or agreeable either to the person himself or to others, and no qualities are disapproved of as vicious but such as have a contrary tendency:" he remarks that "Nature seems indeed to have so happily adjusted our sentiments of approbation and disapprobation to the conveniency both of the individual and of the society, that after the strictest examination it will be found, I believe, that this is universally the case."

And no one can read the *Inquiry into the First Principles of Morals* (the best, as it seemed to himself, of Hume's philosophical compositions) without being at least convinced that if a list were drawn up of the qualities of character and conduct that are directly or indirectly productive of pleasure to ourselves or to others, it would include all that are commonly known as virtues.

Whatever be the origin of our notion of moral goodness or excellence, there is no doubt that "Utility" is a universal characteristic of the dispositions to which we apply it: and that, so far, the Morality of Common Sense may be truly represented as unconscious Utilitarianism. But it may still be objected, that this coincidence is merely general and qualitative, and that it breaks down when we attempt to draw it out in detail, with the quantitative precision which Bentham introduced into the discussion. And no doubt there is a great difference between the assertion that virtue is always productive of happiness, and the assertion that the right action is under all circumstances that which will produce the greatest possible happiness to the greatest possible number. But it must be borne in mind that our present argument for Utilitarianism does not aim at proving the absolute coincidence in results of the Intuitional and Utilitarian methods. Indeed, if it could succeed in proving as much as this, its success would seem to be suicidal, as it would then be practically indifferent whether we did or did not adopt the Utilitarian principle. Its aim is rather to shew a natural transition from the Morality of Common Sense to Utilitarianism, somewhat like the transi-

tion in special branches of practice from trained instinct and empirical rules to the technical method that embodies and applies the conclusions of science: so that Utilitarianism may appear only as the scientifically complete and systematically reflective form of that regulation of conduct, which through the whole course of human history has always tended substantially in the same direction. For this purpose we do not need to prove that existing moral rules are *more* conducive to the general happiness than any others: but only to point out in each case some manifest felicific tendency which they possess.

Hume's dissertation, however, incidentally exhibits much more than a simple and general harmony between the moral sentiments with which we commonly regard actions and their foreseen pleasurable and painful consequences. And, in fact, the Utilitarian argument cannot be fairly judged unless we take fully into account the cumulative force which it derives from the complex character of the coincidence between Utilitarianism and Common Sense.

It may be shewn, I think, that the Utilitarian estimate of consequences not only supports broadly the current moral rules, but also sustains their generally received limitations and qualifications: that, again, it explains anomalies in the Morality of Common Sense, which from any other point of view must seem unsatisfactory to the reflective intellect: and moreover, where the current formula is not sufficiently precise for the guidance of conduct, while at the same time difficulties and perplexities arise in the attempt to give it additional precision, the Utilitarian method solves these difficulties and perplexities in general accordance with the vague instincts of Common Sense, and is naturally appealed to for such solution in common moral discussions. It may be shewn further, that it not only supports the generally received view of the relative importance of different duties, but also is naturally called in as arbiter, where rules commonly regarded as co-ordinate come into conflict: that, again, when the same rule is interpreted somewhat differently by different persons, each naturally supports his view by urging its Utility, however strongly he may maintain the rule to be self-evident and known *à priori*: that where we meet with marked diversity of moral opinion on any point, in the

same age and country, we commonly find manifest and impressive Utilitarian reasons on both sides: and that finally the remarkable discrepancies found in comparing the moral codes of different ages and countries are for the most part strikingly correlated to differences either in the actual consequences of actions, or in men's foresight of, or concern for, such consequences. Most of these points are noticed by Hume, though in a somewhat casual and fragmentary way: and many of them have been incidentally illustrated in the course of the examination of Common Sense Morality, with which we were occupied in the preceding book. But considering the importance of the present question, it may be well to exhibit in systematic detail the cumulative argument which has just been summed up, even at the risk of repeating to some extent the results previously given.

§ 2. We may begin by replying to an objection which is frequently urged against Utilitarianism. How, it is asked, if the true ground of the moral goodness or badness of actions lies in their utility or the reverse, can we explain "the broad distinction, both in kind and degree, drawn by Common Sense between the moral and other parts of our nature?.....If the excellence of Virtue consists solely in its tendency to promote the happiness of men, a machine, a fertile field, or a navigable river, would all possess in a very high degree the element of virtue[1]." It might be answered, in the first place, that as the *natural* (non-moral) feelings excited in us by human beings are generally very different from those caused by inanimate objects, it is to be expected that our judgment of goodness or badness should be accompanied by different sentiments in the two cases; just as the beauty of a woman affects one quite differently from the beauty of a landscape. But in the case of qualities on which we pass strictly moral judgments there is a further difference of a fundamental kind. As we saw (B. III. c. 3) actions that are, in the strictest sense of the term, Virtuous, are always voluntary: that is, they are actions which may always be done if the motives for doing them are only sufficiently strong. Hence we expect that the judgments of moral goodness or badness, passed either by the agent himself or by others, will have an immediate

[1] Lecky, *Hist. of Eur. Mor.* c. 1, p. 33.

practical effect in causing actions to be virtuous: and the habitual consciousness of this will account for almost any difference between moral sentiments and the pleasure and pain that we derive from the contemplation of extra-human utilities and inutilities. To this it is replied, that among the tendencies to strictly voluntary actions there are many not commonly regarded as virtuous, which are yet not only useful but on the whole *more* useful than many virtues. "The selfish instinct that leads men to accumulate confers ultimately more advantage on the world than the generous instinct that leads men to give. .....It is scarcely doubtful that a modest, diffident, and retiring nature, distrustful of its own abilities, and shrinking with humility from conflict, produces on the whole less benefit to the world than the self-assertion of an audacious and arrogant nature, which is impelled to every struggle, and developes every capacity. Gratitude has no doubt done much to soften and sweeten the intercourse of life, but the corresponding feeling of revenge was for centuries the one bulwark against Social anarchy, and is even now one of the chief restraints to crime. On the great theatre of public life, especially in periods of great convulsions where passions are fiercely roused, it is neither the man of delicate scrupulosity and sincere impartiality, nor yet the single-minded religious enthusiast, incapable of dissimulation or procrastination, who confers most benefit on the world. It is much rather the astute statesman, earnest about his ends, but unscrupulous about his means, equally free from the trammels of conscience and from the blindness of zeal, who governs because he partly yields to the passions and the prejudices of his time. But.....it has scarcely yet been contended that the delicate conscience which in these cases impairs utility constitutes vice[1]."

These objections are forcibly urged; but they are not very difficult to answer, it being always borne in mind that the present argument does not aim at proving an exact coincidence between Utilitarian inferences and the intuitions of Common Sense, but rather seeks to represent the latter as inchoately and imperfectly Utilitarian.

In the first place, we must carefully distinguish between

[1] Lecky, c. 1, pp. 38, 41 seqq.

admiration and approbation: the recognition of excellence in dispositions, and the recognition of rightness in conduct. An act that a Utilitarian must condemn as likely to do more harm than good may yet shew a disposition or tendency that will on the whole produce more good than harm. This is eminently the case with scrupulously conscientious acts. However true it may be that unenlightened conscientiousness has impelled men to fanatical cruelty, mistaken asceticism, and other infelicific conduct: I suppose no Intuitionist would maintain that carefulness in conforming to the received moral rules has not, on the whole, a tendency to promote happiness. It may be observed, however, that when we perceive the effects of a disposition generally felicific to be in any particular case adverse to happiness, we often apply to it, as so operating, some term of condemnation: thus we speak, in the case above noticed, of "over-scrupulousness" or "fanaticism." But in so far as we perceive that the same disposition would generally produce good results, it is natural still to regard it, abstracting from the particular case, as a good element of character. Secondly, although, in the view of a Utilitarian, only the useful is admirable, he is not bound to maintain that it is necessarily admirable in proportion as it is useful. Indeed Utility itself distinctly prescribes that our praise of human qualities should not be distributed in proportion to Utility; because it is obviously not expedient to encourage by praise qualities which are liable to be found in excess rather than in defect. Hence (e.g.) however necessary self-love or resentment may be to society, it is quite in harmony with Utilitarianism that they should not be recognised as virtues by Common Sense, in so far as it is commonly thought that they will always be found operating with at least sufficient intensity. We find, however, that when self-love comes into conflict with impulses seen to be on the whole pernicious, it is praised as Prudence: and that when a man seems clearly deficient in resentment, he is censured for tameness: though as malevolent impulses are much more obviously productive of pain than pleasure, it is not unnatural that their occasional utility should be somewhat overlooked. The case of Humility and Diffidence may be treated in a somewhat similar way. As we saw[1], it is

[1] B. III. c. 10.

only inadvertently that Common Sense praises the tendency to underrate one's own powers: on reflection every one admits that it cannot be good to be in error on this or any other point. But the desires of Superiority and Esteem are so strong in most men, that arrogance and self-assertion are both much commoner than the opposite defects, and at the same time are faults peculiarly disagreeable to others: so that humility gives us an agreeable surprise, and hence Common Sense may naturally overlook its more latent and remote bad consequences.

In order, however, to estimate fairly the latest Utilitarianism of Common Sense, it seems best to examine the more definite judgments of right and wrong in conduct, rather than the vaguer awards of praise and admiration to dispositions. But before we proceed, with this object, to discuss notions of virtue and duty, it should be observed that there are some among these notions, the examination of which cannot yield positive support to the present argument for Utilitarianism, though it certainly gives no adverse results: as their definitions inevitably involve, in some way or other, the notion of "good" or "right" supposed already determinate: and so they can neither help to determine this notion, nor yet stand in the way of our giving it a Utilitarian interpretation. For example, we saw this to be the case with the chief of the intellectual excellences discussed in B. III. c. 3. Wisdom, as commonly conceived, is not exactly the faculty of choosing the right means to the end of universal happiness; rather, as we saw, its notion involves an uncritical synthesis of the different ends and principles that are distinguished and separately examined in the present treatise. But if its import is not distinctly Utilitarian, it is certainly not anything else as distinct from Utilitarian: if we can only define it as the faculty or habit of choosing the right or best means to the right or best end, for that very reason our definition leaves it quite open to us to give the notions "good" or "right" a Utilitarian content.

Again, there is another large class of virtues, which, as commonly formulated, do not seem to refer explicitly to any higher principle: but in which, nevertheless, reflection forces us to suppose such a reference, if we would make their maxims sufficiently precise to guide conduct.

For example, we do not seem able to draw the line between Liberality and Profusion, Frugality and Meanness, Courage and Foolhardiness, Courtesy and Obsequiousness; nor to decide when Pride ceases to be proper, and when Placability becomes a weakness: without referring to some standard not obtainable by mere reflection on the notions themselves.

In many of these cases it is evident that, when the necessity of this reference is seen, the standard to which Common Sense has recourse is more or less definitely Utilitarian. It is recognised broadly that the disposition commonly praised as virtuous passes over into a vice when its consequences are more harmful than beneficial. No doubt, we cannot say that the line is commonly drawn with a sole reference to "the greatest happiness of the greatest number:" as appeal is also made to other rules of duty, taken as absolute: for example, Courtesy is limited by the duty of Veracity, and Placability by the duty of enforcing law and requiting ill-desert, and Liberality by the duty of providing for one's family, &c. But if these more apparently definite and ultimate notions of duty can be exhibited as latently Utilitarian, it seems evident that a similar result may be taken as admitted for all derivative and less definite rules and maxims.

§ 3. Let us then consider first the group of virtues and duties discussed in Book III. c. 4, under the head of Benevolence. Here we naturally begin by noticing the obvious point of coincidence between the Intuitional and Utilitarian systems. For it is a fair description of Utilitarianism to say that it resolves all other duties and virtues into Rational Benevolence. It is true that Benevolence would perhaps be more commonly defined as a disposition to promote the Good of one's fellow-creatures, than their Happiness (as definitely understood by Utilitarians). Still, as we saw[1], certain thinkers of the Intuitional school are as definite as Utilitarians in stating *Happiness* (and not Perfection) as that which it is our duty to promote in the case of others: and Common Sense seems, on the whole, to incline to this view. And again, the chief element in the common notion of good (besides happiness) is moral good or Virtue: therefore if we can shew that the other virtues are all qualities

[1] B. III. c. 4, § 1.

conducive to the happiness of the agent himself or of others, it is evident that Benevolence, whether it prompts us to promote the virtue of others or their happiness, will aim directly or indirectly at the Utilitarian end[1].

Nor, further, does the comprehensive range which Utilitarians give to Benevolence, in stating as their ultimate end the greatest happiness of all sentient beings, seem to be really opposed to Common Sense: for in so far as certain Intuitional moralists restrict the scope of the direct duty of Benevolence to human beings, and regard our duties to brute animals as merely indirect and derived "from the duty of Self-culture," they and not their Utilitarian opponents appear paradoxical. And if, in laying down that each agent is to consider all other happiness as equally important with his own, Utilitarianism goes decidedly beyond the standard of duty commonly prescribed under the head of Benevolence, it yet can scarcely be said to conflict with Common Sense on this point. For, as Mill urges[2], it here only coincides with the ethical teaching of Christianity, which has commonly been accepted as true in modern Europe, no less by those who disbelieve its miraculous revelation than by professed Christians. It is to be observed, moreover, that this theoretical impartiality of Utilitarianism has to be importantly modified in its practical application. It would clearly not promote the universal happiness for each one practically to concern himself with the happiness of others as much as with his own. For in the first place, generally speaking, each man is far better able to provide for his own happiness than for that of any other person, from his more intimate knowledge of his own desires and needs, and his greater opportunities of gratifying them. And besides, it is under the stimulus of self-interest that the active energies of most men are most easily and thoroughly drawn out: and if this were removed, general happiness would be diminished by a serious loss of those means of happiness which are obtained by labour; and also, to some extent, by the diminution of the labour itself. If, however, in order to test the abstract principle, we take a hypothetical case, and suppose that in any particular instance I know that my own

[1] It will be seen that I do not here assume the conclusions of ch. 14 of the preceding book.

[2] *Utilitarianism*, c. 2, p. 24.

happiness can only be obtained at the expense of some more important happiness to some one else—even if he be Rousseau's "Mandarin in China"—then even Common-Sense morality seems clearly to forbid me to gratify my egoistic impulse.

It might indeed be objected, on the other hand, that under the notions of Generosity, Self-sacrifice, &c., Common Sense praises (though it does not prescribe as obligatory) a suppression of egoism beyond what Utilitarianism approves: for we perhaps admire as virtuous a man who gives up his own happiness for another's sake, even when the happiness that he confers is less than that which he resigns, so that there is a diminution of happiness on the whole. But (1) it seems very doubtful whether we do altogether approve such conduct when the disproportion between the sacrifice and the benefit is obvious and striking: and (2) a spectator can hardly tell whether happiness is lost on the whole, as he cannot tell whether he who makes the sacrifice is not compensated by sympathetic and moral pleasure: and (3) even if there be a loss in the particular case, still our admiration of self-sacrifice will admit of a Utilitarian justification, because such conduct shews a disposition far above the average in its general tendency to promote happiness, and it is this disposition that we admire rather than the particular act.

It has been said[1], however, that the special claims and duties belonging to special relations, by which each man is connected with a few out of the whole number of human beings, are expressly ignored by the rigid impartiality of the Utilitarian formula: and hence that, though Utilitarianism and Common Sense may agree in the proposition that all right action is conducive to the happiness of some one or other, and so far beneficent, still they are irreconcileably divergent on the radical question of the *distribution* of beneficence.

Here, however, it seems that even fair-minded opponents have scarcely treated the Utilitarian argument fairly. They have attacked Bentham's well-known formula, "every man to count for one, nobody for more than one," on the ground that the general happiness will be best attained by inequality in the distribution of each one's services. But it is just be-

[1] Cf. J. Grote, *Utilitarianism*, c. 5.

cause it will be best attained in this way that Utilitarianism necessarily prescribes this way of aiming at it. And the reasons why it is, generally speaking, conducive to the general happiness that each individual should distribute his beneficence in the channels marked out by commonly recognised ties and claims, are tolerably obvious.

For first, in the chief relations discussed in ch. 4 of Book III. —the domestic, and those constituted by consanguinity, friendship, previous kindnesses and special needs,—the services which Common Sense prescribes as duties are commonly prompted by natural affection, while at the same time they tend to develope and sustain such affection. Now, the subsistence of benevolent affections among human beings is itself an important means to the Utilitarian end, because (as Shaftesbury and his followers forcibly urged) the most intense and highly valued of our pleasures are derived from such affections: for both the emotion itself is highly pleasurable, and it imparts this quality to the activities which it prompts and sustains, and the happiness thus produced is continually enhanced by the sympathetic echo of the pleasures conferred on others. And again, where genuine affection subsists, the practical objections to spontaneous beneficence, which were before noticed, are much diminished in force. For such affection tends to be reciprocated, and the kindnesses which are its outcome and expression commonly win a requital of affection: and in so far as this is the case, they have less tendency to weaken the springs of activity in the person benefited; and may even strengthen them by exciting other sources of energy than the egoistic—personal affection, and gratitude, and the desire to deserve love, and the desire to imitate beneficence. And hence it has been often observed that the injurious effects of almsgiving are at least much diminished if the alms are bestowed with unaffected sympathy and kindliness, and in such a way as to elicit a genuine response of gratitude. And further, the beneficence that springs from affection is less likely to be frustrated from defect of knowledge: for not only are we powerfully stimulated to study the real conditions of the happiness of those whom we love, but also such study is rendered more effective from the sympathy which naturally accompanies affection.

On these grounds the Utilitarian will evidently approve of the cultivation of affection and the performance of affectionate services. It may be said, however, that what we ought to approve is not so much affection for special individuals, but rather a feeling more universal in its scope—charity, philanthropy, or (as it has been called) the "Enthusiasm of Humanity." And certainly all special affections tend occasionally to come into conflict with the principle of promoting the general good: and Utilitarianism must therefore prescribe such a culture of the feelings as will, as far as possible, counteract this tendency. And no doubt some have thought the existing relations of human beings highly unfavourable to this culture: and have desired instead some approximation to Plato's ideal of a "communion of wives and children and property, in which the private and the individual should be altogether banished from life." But this view is opposed to the results of psychological experience as commonly interpreted: for it seems rather that most persons are only capable of strong affections towards a few human beings in certain close relations, especially the domestic: and that if these are suppressed, what they will feel towards their fellow-creatures generally will be, as Aristotle says, "but a watery kindliness" and a very feeble counterpoise to self-love: and thus that such specialized affections as the present organization of society normally produces afford the best means of developing in most persons a more extended benevolence, to the degree to which they are capable of feeling it. Besides, as each person is for the most part, from limitation either of power or of knowledge, not in a position to do much good to more than a very small number of persons: it seems, on this ground alone, desirable that his chief benevolent impulses should be correspondingly limited.

And this leads us to consider, secondly, the reasons why, affection apart, it is conducive to the general happiness that prior claims should be commonly recognised as attaching to special relations: so as to modify that impartial universality in the distribution of beneficence which Utilitarianism *primâ facie* inculcates. For clearness' sake it seems best to take this argument separately, though it cannot easily be divided from the former one, because the services in question are often such as

cannot so well be rendered without affection. In such cases, as we saw[1], Common Sense regards the affection itself as a duty, in so far as it is capable of being cultivated: but still prescribes the performance of the services even if the affection be unhappily absent. Indeed we may properly consider the services to which we are commonly prompted by the domestic affections, and also those to which we are moved by gratitude and pity, as an integral part of the general system of mutual co-operation by which the well-being of society is maintained, on its present basis of free contract: as being an indispensable supplement to the still more essential services which are definitely prescribed by Law, or rendered on commercial terms as a part of an express bargain. As the plutologists have explained, the means of happiness are immensely increased by that complex system of mutual co-operation which has been gradually organized among civilised men: and it is commonly thought that under such a system the general happiness will be generally best promoted by letting each individual exchange such services as he is disposed to render for such return as he can obtain for them by free contract. But to this general principle there are many large exceptions. Of these the most important is constituted by the case of children. It is necessary for the well-being of mankind that in each generation children should be produced in adequate numbers, neither too many nor too few; and that, as they cannot be left to provide for themselves, they should be adequately nourished and protected during the period of infancy: and further, that they should be carefully trained in good habits, intellectual, moral and physical: and it is commonly believed that the best or even the only known means of attaining these ends in even a tolerable degree is afforded by the existing institution of the Family, resting as it does on a basis of legal and moral rules combined. For Law fixes a minimum of mutual services and draws the broad outlines of behaviour for the different members of the family, imposing[2] on the parents lifelong union and complete mutual fidelity and the duty of

[1] B. III. c. 4, § 1.

[2] Strictly speaking, of course, Law does not impose this, but only refuses to recognise and enforce connubial contracts of any other kind: but the social effect is substantially the same.

providing for their children the necessaries of life up to a certain age; in return for which it gives them the control of their children for the same period, and sometimes lays on the latter the burden of supporting their parents when aged and destitute: so that Morality, in inculcating a completer harmony of interests and an ampler interchange of kindnesses, is merely filling in the outlines drawn by Law. We found, however, in attempting to formulate the different domestic duties as recognised by Common Sense, that there seemed to be in most cases a large vague margin with respect to which *consensus* could not be affirmed, and which, in fact, forms an arena for continual disputes. But we have now to observe that it is just this margin which furnishes the most striking evidence of the unconscious Utilitarianism of common moral opinion: for when the question is once raised as to the precise mutual duties of husbands and wives, or of parents and children, each disputant commonly supports his view by a forecast of the effects on human happiness to be expected from the general establishment of any proposed rule: this seems to be the standard to which the matter is, by common consent, referred.

Similarly the claim to services that arises out of special need (which natural sympathy moves us to recognise) rests on an obvious Utilitarian basis: indeed its proper fulfilment seems so important to the well-being of society, that this duty also has sometimes been partly taken within the sphere of Law, and converted into a legal obligation. We noticed that the main Utilitarian reason why it is not right (for example) for every rich man to distribute his superfluous wealth among the poor, is that the happiness of all is thought on the whole to be most promoted by maintaining in all male adults the expectation that each will be thrown on his own resources for the supply of his own wants. But if I am made aware that, owing to a sudden calamity that could not have been foreseen, another's resources are manifestly inadequate to protect him from pain or serious discomfort, the case is altered: my theoretical obligation to consider his happiness as much as my own becomes at once practical: and I am bound to make as much effort to relieve him as will not entail a greater loss of happiness to myself or others. If, however, the calamity is one which might have

been foreseen and averted by proper care, my duty becomes more doubtful: for then by relieving him I seem to be in danger of encouraging improvidence in others. In such a case a Utilitarian has to weigh this indirect evil against the direct good of removing pain and distress: and it is now more and more generally recognised that the question of providing for the destitute has to be treated as a Utilitarian problem of which these are the elements; whether we are considering the minimum that should be secured to them by law, or the proper supplementary action of private charity.

Poverty, however, is not the only case in which it is conducive to the general happiness that one man should render unbought services to another. In any condition or calling a man may find himself unable to ward off some evil or to realize some legitimate or worthy end without assistance of such kind as he cannot purchase on the ordinary commercial terms: assistance which, on the one hand, will have no bad effect on the receiver, from the exceptional nature of the emergency, while at the same time it may not be burdensome to the giver. Here, again, some jurists have thought that where the service to be rendered is great, and the burden of rendering it very slight, it might properly be made matter of legal obligation: so that (e.g.) if I could save a man from drowning by merely holding out a hand, I should be legally punishable if I omitted the act. But, however this may be, the moral rule condemning the refusal of aid in emergencies is obviously conducive to the general happiness.

Further, besides these, so to say, *accidentally* unbought services, there are some for which there is normally no market-price: such as counsel and assistance in the intimate perplexities of life, which one is only willing to receive from genuine friends. It much promotes the general happiness that such services should be generally rendered. On this ground, as well as that of the emotional pleasures which directly spring from it, we perceive Friendship to be an important means to the Utilitarian end. At the same time we feel that the charm of Friendship is lost if the flow of emotion is not spontaneous and unforced. The combination of these two views seems to be exactly represented by the sympathy that is not quite admiration with which

Common Sense regards all close and strong affections; and the regret that is not quite disapproval with which it contemplates their decay.

In all cases where it is conducive to the general happiness that unbought services should be rendered, Gratitude (if we mean by this a settled disposition to repay the benefit in whatever way one can on a fitting opportunity) is enjoined by Utilitarianism no less than by Common Sense; for one can hardly expect that the rendering of any kind of services will be common, unless there is a general disposition to requite them. In fact we may say that a general understanding that all services which it is expedient that *A* should render to *B* will be repaid by *B*, is a natural supplement of the more definite contracts by which the main part of the great social interchange of services is arranged. Indeed the one kind of requital merges in the other, and no sharp line can be drawn between the two: we cannot always say distinctly whether the requital of a benefit is a pure act of gratitude or the fulfilment of a tacit understanding[1]. There is, however, a certain difficulty in this view of gratitude as analogous to the fulfilment of a bargain. For it may be said that of the services peculiar to friendship, disinterestedness is an indispensable characteristic: and that in all cases benefits conferred without expectation of reward have a peculiar excellence, and are indeed peculiarly adapted to arouse gratitude: but if they are conferred in expectation of such gratitude, they lose this excellence: and yet, again, it would be very difficult to treat as a friend one from whom gratitude was not expected. This seems, at first sight, an inextricable entanglement: but here, as elsewhere, what appeared logical contradiction turns out to be merely psychological complexity. For most of our actions are done from several different motives, either coexisting or succeeding one another in rapid alternation: thus a man may have a perfectly disinterested desire to benefit another, and one which might possibly prevail over all conflicting motives if all hope of requital were cut off, and yet it may be well that this generous impulse should be sustained by a trust that

[1] Sometimes such unbargained requital is even legally obligatory: as when children are bound to repay the care spent on them by supporting their parents in decrepitude.

requital will not be withheld. And in fact the apparent puzzle really affords striking support to our present argument. For, on the one hand, Utilitarianism prescribes that we should render services whenever it is conducive to the general happiness to do so, which may often be the case without taking into account the gain to oneself which would result from their requital: and on the other, since we must conclude from the actual selfishness of average men that such services would not be adequately rendered without expectation of requital, it is also conducive to the general happiness that men should recognise a moral obligation to repay them.

We have discussed only the most conspicuous of the duties of affection: but it is perhaps obvious that similar reasonings would apply in the case of the others.

In all cases there are three distinct lines of argument which tend to shew that the commonly received view of special claims and duties arising out of special relations, though *primâ facie* opposed to the impartial universality of the Utilitarian principle, is really maintained by a well-considered application of the latter. For, first, morality is here in a manner protecting the normal channels and courses of natural benevolent affections: and the development of such affections seems of the highest importance to human happiness, both as a direct source of pleasure, and as an indispensable preparation for a more enlarged "altruism." And again, the mere fact that such affections are normal, causes an expectation of the services that are their natural expression: and the disappointment of such expectations is inevitably painful. While finally, apart from these considerations, we can shew in each case strong Utilitarian reasons why, generally speaking, services should be rendered to the persons in whom these claims are vested rather than to others.

We may add, in conclusion, that all the difficulties of determining the limits of these duties, and their relative importance, which the Intuitional method raised and failed to overcome, are removed, in theory at least, by the Utilitarian synthesis. For each of the preceding arguments has shewn us different kinds of pleasures gained and pains averted by the fulfilment of the claims in question. There are, first, those in the causing or

averting of which the service consists: secondly, it prevents the pain and secondary harm of disappointed expectation: thirdly, we have to reckon the various pleasures connected with the exercise of natural benevolent affections, especially when reciprocated, including the indirect advantages of maintaining such affections, as a means of keeping the agent's character in a state conducive to general happiness. All these different pleasures and pains combine differently, and with almost infinite variation as circumstances vary, into Utilitarian reasons for each of these claims: none of these reasons being absolute and conclusive, but each having its own weight, while liable to be outweighed by others.

§ 4. I pass to consider another group of duties, often contrasted with those of Benevolence, under the comprehensive notion of Justice.

"That Justice is useful to society," says Hume, "it would be a superfluous undertaking to prove:" what he endeavours to shew at some length is, "that public utility is the *sole* origin of Justice:" and it is the same question of origin which has chiefly occupied the attention of Mill[1]. Here, however, we are not so much concerned with the growth of the sentiment of Justice from experiences of utility, as with the Utilitarian basis of the mature notion: while at the same time if the analysis previously given be correct, the Justice that is commonly demanded and inculcated is something more complex than these writers have recognised. What Hume (e. g.) means by Justice is rather what I have called Order, understood in its widest sense: the observance of the actual system of rules, whether strictly legal or customary, which bind together the different members of any society into an organic whole, checking malevolent or otherwise injurious impulses, distributing the different objects of men's clashing desires, and exacting such positive services, customary or contractual, as are commonly recognised as matters of debt. Probably no system of Law has ever had a continuous existence, in the working of which these beneficent tendencies have not been clearly predominant: though it may be said that these have always been combined with other less satisfactory effects: for example, there have rarely been want-

[1] *Utilitarianism*, c. 5.

ing plausible empirical arguments for the revolutionary paradox quoted by Plato, that "laws are imposed in the interest of rulers." Still that it is generally conducive to the general happiness that each individual should obey the laws of his society, is a proposition, as Hume says, that scarcely needs proof: indeed the orderly, law-abiding habit is of such paramount importance to a community, that even where particular laws are clearly injurious, it is almost always more expedient to observe them, apart from any penalty which their breach might entail on the individual. We saw, however, that Common Sense sometimes bids us refuse obedience to bad laws, because "we ought to obey God rather than men" (though there seems to be no clear intuition as to the kind or degree of badness that justifies resistance): and further allows us, in special emergencies, to violate rules generally good, for "necessity has no law," and "salus populi suprema lex."

In this latter phrase the Utilitarian basis of the duty seems to be implicitly recognised: for it is illogical to admit it to be limited and to determine its limits by Utilitarian considerations, and yet to maintain that within these limits the duty is absolute and independent.

The Utilitarian view, again, gets rid of the difficulties in which the attempt to define intuitively the truly legitimate source of legislative authority involved us[1]: at the same time that it justifies to some extent each of the different views current as to the intrinsic legitimacy of governments. For, on the one hand, it finds the moral basis of law-observance in the effects rather than the causes of the laws that exist: so that, generally speaking, obedience will seem due to any *de facto* government that is not legislating very badly. On the other hand, in so far as laws originating in a particular way are likely to be (1) better, or (2) more readily observed, it is a Utilitarian duty to aim at introducing this mode of origination: and thus in a certain stage of social development it may be right that a "representative system" should be popularly demanded, or (in extreme cases) even violently introduced: while, again, there is expediency in maintaining an ancient system of legislation, because men readily obey such: and loyalty to a dispossessed govern-

[1] Cf. B. III. c. 6, §§ 2, 3.

ment may be on the whole expedient, even at the cost of some temporary suffering and disorder, in order that ambitious men may not find usurpation too easy. Here, as elsewhere, Utilitarianism at once supports the different reasons commonly put forward as absolute, and also brings them theoretically to a common measure, so that in any particular case we have a principle of decision between conflicting political reasons.

As was before said, this Law-observance, in so far at least as it affects the interests of other individuals, is what we frequently mean by Justice. It seems, however[1], that the notion of Justice, exhaustively analysed, includes several distinct elements combined in a somewhat complex manner: we have to inquire, therefore, what latent utilities are represented by each of these elements.

Now, first, a constant part of the notion, which appears in it even when the Just is not distinguished from the Legal, is Equality: or perhaps we should rather say, the negation of arbitrary inequality. This presents itself most obviously as Equality in the execution of laws, excluding all partiality and "respect of persons" on the part of judges and administrators. Still, as was said, we demand under the notion of Justice the same kind of equality in making laws: for the legislator who gives an arbitrary preference to the interests of any one class of persons is clearly unjust. Indeed, so far as this element goes, the principle of Justice is no more than a special application of the more fundamental maxim that the rightness of any conduct must be determined on *some* universal ground: it cannot be reasonable to treat two persons differently if their cases are similar in all material circumstances. And this maxim obviously belongs to Utilitarianism no less than to all other systems of Ethics. At the same time this negative criterion is clearly inadequate for the complete determination of what is just in laws, or in conduct generally: when we have admitted this, it still remains to ask, "What are the inequalities in laws, and in the distribution of pleasures and pains outside the sphere of law, which are not arbitrary and unreasonable? and to what general principles can they be reduced?"

One such principle, which we found to be latent in the com-

[1] Cf. Bk. III. c. 5.

mon notion of Justice, is that of "conformity to normal expectations:" which seems obligatory in different degrees, according as the expectations are based upon definite engagement, or on some vague mutual understanding, or are merely such as an average man would form from past experience of the conduct of other men. In these latter cases Common Sense appeared to be somewhat perplexed as to the validity of the claims. But for the Utilitarian the difficulty has ceased to exist. He will hold any disappointment of expectations to be *pro tanto* an evil, but a greater evil in proportion to the previous security of the expectant individual, from the greater shock thus given to his reliance on the conduct of his fellow-men generally: and many times greater in proportion as the expectation is generally recognised as normal and reasonable, as in this case the shock extends to all who are in any way cognisant of his disappointment. The importance to mankind of being able to rely on each other's actions is so great, that in the case of absolutely definite engagements there is scarcely any advantage that can counterbalance the harm done by violating them. Still, we found[1] that several exceptions and qualifications to the rule of Good Faith were more or less distinctly recognised by Common Sense: and most of these have a Utilitarian basis, which it does not need much penetration to discern. To begin, we may notice that the superficial view of the obligation of a promise which makes it depend on the assertion of the promiser, and not, as Utilitarians hold, on the expectations produced in the promisee, cannot fairly be attributed to Common Sense: for we all condemn a breach of promise much more strongly when others have acted in reliance on it, that when its observance did not directly concern others, and its breach only causes the indirect evil of a bad precedent: as when a man breaks a pledge of total abstinence. We see, again, how a material change of circumstances[2] diminishes the Utilitarian reason for keeping a promise: for whatever expectations may be disappointed in that case, they are at least not those which the promise originally created. It is obvious, too, that it is not advantageous to the community that men should be able to rely on the performance of promises procured by fraud or unlawful force: indeed the chief Utilita-

[1] Bk. III. c. 6. [2] Cf. *ante*, Bk. III. c. 6, § 7.

rian ground for not repudiating such promises is, that persons cognisant of the repudiation might not know or might insufficiently consider the special moral circumstances of the case, and so might be demoralised by the example[1]. We saw, again[2], that when the performance would be injurious to the promisee, Common Sense is disposed to admit that its obligation is superseded, and is so far purely Utilitarian. And even when it is only the promiser who would be injured, still, if the harm be extreme, Common Sense is at least doubtful whether the promise should be kept. And so for the other qualifications and exceptions: they all turn out to be as clearly Utilitarian, as the general utility of keeping one's word is plain and manifest.

But further, the expediency of satisfying natural and normal expectations, even when they are not based upon a definite contract, is obvious: it will clearly conduce to the tranquillity of social existence, and to the settled and well-adjusted activity on which social happiness greatly depends, that such expectations should be as little as possible baulked. And here Utilitarianism relieves us of the difficulties which beset the common view of just conduct as something absolutely precise and definite. For in this vaguer region we cannot draw a sharp line between valid and invalid claims: "injustice" shades gradually off into mere "hardship." Hence the Utilitarian view that the disappointment of natural expectations is an evil, but an evil which must sometimes be incurred for the sake of a greater good, is that to which Common Sense is practically forced, though unable to reconcile it with the theoretical absoluteness of Intuitive Morality.

The gain of recognising the relativity of this obligation will be still more felt, when we take into account the other element which we found in the common notion of Justice—Ideal Justice, as I called it.

We saw that there were two competing views of this ideal, or perhaps we may say two extreme types between

[1] Bk. III. c. 6, § 9.

[2] There is another reason of a different kind in the case where the law-breaker is too strong to be put down, so that the law-abiding part of society has to reckon with him as a permanent hostile power, and establish (as diplomatists say) a *modus vivendi* with him.

which the looser notions of ordinary men seem to fluctuate: which I called respectively the Individualistic and the Socialistic. According to the former view an ideal system of Law ought to aim at Freedom, or perfect mutual non-interference of all the members of the community, as an absolute end. Now the general Utilitarian reasons for leaving each rational being free to seek happiness in his own way are obvious and striking: for, generally speaking, each is best qualified to provide for his own interests, since even when he does not know best what they are and how to attain them, he is at any rate most keenly concerned for them: and again, the consciousness of freedom and concomitant responsibility increases the average effective activity of men: and besides, the discomfort of constraint is directly an evil and *pro tanto* to be avoided. Still, there are important exceptional cases in which complete freedom would certainly or probably produce a balance of unhappiness: and we find these actually recognised in the laws and customs of the freest societies, and the practical realization of freedom limited accordingly. Indeed we saw[1] that the attempt to construct a consistent code of laws, taking Maximum Freedom (instead of Happiness) as an absolute end, must lead to insoluble puzzles and startling paradoxes. So that we may fairly say that in so far as Common Sense has adopted the Individualistic ideal, it has always been as subordinate to and limited by the Utilitarian first principle.

It seems, however, that what we commonly demand or long for, under the name of Ideal Justice, is not so much the realization of Freedom, as the distribution of good and evil according to Desert: indeed it is as a means to this latter end that Freedom is often advocated: for it is said that if we protect men completely from mutual interference, each will reap the good and bad consequences of his own conduct, and so be happy or unhappy in proportion to his deserts. However this may be, it is clear that the principle of Justice so understood is quite in harmony with Utilitarianism, if only we give the notions of "good" and "ill" desert a Utilitarian interpretation: to which (as in the former case of Benevolence) Common Sense at least offers no obstacle. For it is obviously the best encouragement

[1] Bk. III. c. 5, § 4.

to the production of general happiness that we should reward and punish men in proportion as their conduct is felicific or the reverse: only the utilitarian scale of rewards will not be determined entirely by the magnitude of the services performed, but partly also by the difficulty of inducing men to perform them. But this latter element seems to be always taken into account (though perhaps unconsciously) by Common Sense: for, as we have been led to notice[1], we do not recognise *merit* in right actions, if they are such as men are naturally inclined to perform rather too much than too little.

Again, in spite of the opposition between the Intuitional principle that ill-desert lies in wrong intention and the Utilitarian view of punishment as purely preventive, we find that in the actual administration of criminal justice, Common Sense is forced, however reluctantly, into practical Utilitarianism. After a civil war it demands the execution of the most purely patriotic rebels: and after a railway accident it clamours for the severe punishment of unintentional neglects, which, except for their consequences, would have been regarded as very venial. And it is often curious in such cases to observe the sophistries by which Common Sense tries to persuade itself that there has been wilful wrong-doing.

If, however, in any distribution of pleasures and privileges, or of pains and burdens, considerations of desert do not properly come in (i.e. if the good or evil to be distributed have no relation to any conduct on the part of the persons who are to receive it): or if it is practically impossible to take them into account: then Common Sense seems to fall back on simple equality as the principle of just apportionment. Now we saw that the Utilitarian formula does not strictly include any principle for distributing the happiness which it directs us to make as great as possible. Still, in the case supposed, Equality is the only mode of distribution that is not arbitrary and so unreasonable: and thus this mode of apportioning the means of happiness is likely to produce more happiness on the whole: partly because men have a disinterested aversion to unreason: but still more because they have an aversion to any kind of inferiority to others, which is much intensified when the inferiority

[1] Cf. *ante*, § 2 and B. III. c. 2, § 1.

seems unreasonable. This latter feeling is so strong that it often prevails in spite of obvious claims of desert: and it may even be expedient that it should so prevail within limits.

For, finally, it must be observed that Utilitarianism furnishes us with a common standard to which the different elements included in the notion of Justice may be reduced. Such a standard is imperatively required: as these different elements are continually liable to conflict with each other. The issue, for example, in practical politics between Conservatives and Reformers often represents such a conflict: the question is, whether we ought to do a certain violence to expectations arising naturally out of the existing social order, with the view of bringing about a distribution of the means of happiness more in accordance with ideal justice. Here, if my analysis of the common notion of Justice be sound, the attempt to extract from it a clear decision of such an issue must necessarily fail: as the conflict is, so to say, permanently latent in the very core of Common Sense. But the Utilitarian will merely use this notion of Justice as a guide to different kinds of utilities: and in so far as these are incompatible, he will balance one set of advantages against the other, and decide according to the preponderance.

§ 5. The duty of Truth-speaking is often taken as a clear and striking instance of an independent moral intuition. But a careful study of the qualifications with which the common opinion of mankind actually inculcates this duty seems to lead us to an opposite result: for not only is the general utility of truth-speaking so manifest as to need no proof, but wherever this utility seems to be absent, or outweighed by particular bad consequences, we find that Common Sense at least half admits an exception to the rule. For example, if a man be pursuing criminal ends, it is *primâ facie* injurious to the community that he should be aided in his pursuit by being able to rely on the assertions of others. So far deception seems legitimate as a protection against crime: but when we consider the bad effects on habit, and in the way of example, of even a single act of unveracity, the case is seen to be, on Utilitarian principles, doubtful: and this is just the view of Common Sense. Again, though it is generally a man's interest to know the

truth, there are exceptional cases in which it is injurious to him; as when an invalid hears bad news: and here, too, Common Sense is disposed to suspend the rule. Again, we found it difficult to define exactly wherein Veracity consists: for we may either require that the spoken words shall be true, or the inferences which the speaker foresees will be drawn from them, or both. Perfect Candour, no doubt, would require both: but in the various circumstances where this seems inexpedient, we often find Common Sense at least half-willing to dispense with one or other part of the double obligation, though not with both. Thus we found a respectable school of thinkers maintaining that a religious truth may properly be communicated by means of a historical fiction: and, on the other hand, the unsuitability of perfect frankness to our existing social relations is recognised in the common rules of politeness, which impose on us not unfrequently the necessity of suppressing truths and suggesting falsehoods. I would not say that in any of these cases Common Sense pronounces quite decidedly in favour of unveracity: but then neither is Utilitarianism decided, as the importance of maintaining a general habit of truth-speaking is so great, that it is not easy to say positively that it is outweighed by even strong special reasons for violating the rule.

When we pass to consider the different views as to the legitimacy of the Malevolent impulse, out of which we found it hard to frame a consistent doctrine for Common Sense, we find them exactly correspondent to different forecasts of the consequences of gratifying such impulses. *Primâ facie*, the desire to injure any one in particular is inconsistent with a deliberate purpose of benefiting as much as possible people in general: accordingly, we find that what I may call Superficial Common Sense passes a sweeping condemnation on these impulses. But a study of the actual facts of society shews that resentment plays an important part in that repression of injuries which is necessary to social well-being: accordingly, the reflective moralist shrinks from excluding it altogether. It is evident, however, that personal ill-will is a very dangerous means to the general happiness: for its direct end is the exact reverse of happiness; and though the realization of this may in certain cases be the least of two evils, still the impulse if encou-

raged is likely to prompt to the infliction of pain beyond the limits of just punishment, and to have an injurious reaction on the character of the angry person, and even, through sympathy, upon others. Accordingly, the moralist is disposed to prescribe that indignation be directed always against acts, and not against persons: and it seems clear that if indignation so restricted would be efficient in repressing punishment, this is the state of mind most conducive to the general happiness. But it is doubtful whether human nature is capable of maintaining this distinction, or whether, if it could be maintained, the more refined and abstract feeling would by itself be sufficiently efficacious: accordingly, Common Sense is reluctant to condemn personal ill-will if directed against wrong-doers.

It would be tedious—and seems unnecessary for the reasons before given—to go through a similar argument for the minor social virtues with their vaguer maxims. Nor is it needful to shew that Temperance, Self-control, and what are called the Self-regarding virtues generally, are "useful" to the individual who possesses them. If it is not quite clear, in the view of Common Sense, to what end that regulation and government of appetites and passions, which moralists have so much inculcated and admired, is to be directed: at least there seems no obstacle in the way of our defining this end as Happiness. And even in the ascetic extreme of Self-control, which has sometimes led to the repudiation of sensual pleasures as radically bad, we may trace an unconscious Utilitarianism. For the ascetic condemnation has always been chiefly directed against those pleasures, in respect of which men are especially liable to commit excesses dangerous to health: and free indulgence in which, even when it keeps clear of injury to health, is thought to interfere with the development of other faculties and susceptibilities which are important sources of happiness.

§ 6. An apparent exception to this statement may seem to be constituted in the case of the sexual appetite, by the regulation prescribed under the notion of Purity or Chastity. And there is no doubt that under this head we find condemned, with special vehemence and severity, acts of which the immediate effect is pleasure not obviously outweighed by subsequent pain. But a closer examination of this exception transforms

it into an important contribution to the present proof: as it shews a peculiarly complex and delicate correspondence between moral sentiments and social utilities.

In the first place, the peculiar intensity and delicacy of the moral sentiments that govern the relations of the sexes are thoroughly justified by the vast importance to society of the end to which they are obviously a means: the maintenance, namely, of the permanent unions which are thought to be necessary for the proper rearing and training of children. Hence the first and fundamental rule in this department is that which directly secures conjugal fidelity. But, secondly, the utility of protecting marriage indirectly, by condemning all extra-nuptial intercourse of the sexes, is easy to expound: for otherwise men would not have adequate motives to incur the restraints and burdens which marriage entails: and the youth of both sexes would form habits of feeling and conduct tending to unfit them for marriage: and, again, if such intercourse were fertile, it would be attended with those bad effects on the succeeding generation, which it seems the object of permanent unions to prevent: while if it were sterile, the future of the human race would, as far as we can see, be still more profoundly imperilled.

But, further, it is only on Utilitarian principles that we can account for the anomalous difference which the morality of Common Sense has always made between the two sexes as regards the simple offence of unchastity. For the natural incitements to commit the offence exist equally in both cases: and it is commonly more deliberate in the man, who has the additional guilt of soliciting and persuading the woman: so that, according to the ordinary canons of Intuitional Morality, it ought to be more severely condemned in him. The actual inversion of this result can only be justified by taking into account the greater interest that society has in maintaining a high standard of female chastity. For the degradation of this standard must strike at the root of family life, by impairing men's security in the exercise of their parental affections: but there is no corresponding consequence of male unchastity, which may therefore prevail to a considerable extent without imperilling the very existence of the family, though it impairs its well-being.

At the same time the condemnation of unchastity in men, by the common moral sense of Christian countries at the present day, is sufficiently clear and explicit: though we recognise the existence of a laxer code—the morality, as it is called, of "the world"—which treats it as indifferent, or very venial. But the very difference between the two codes gives a kind of support to the present argument: as it corresponds to easily explained differences of insight into the consequences of maintaining certain moral sanctions. For partly it is thought by "men of the world" that men cannot practically be restrained from sexual indulgence, at least at the period of life when the passions are strongest: and hence that it is *expedient* to tolerate such kind and degree of illicit sexual intercourse as is not directly dangerous to the well-being of families. Partly, again, it is maintained by some, in bolder antagonism to Common Sense, that the existence of a certain limited amount of such intercourse (with a special class of women, carefully separated, as at present, from the rest of society) is scarcely a real evil, and may even be a positive gain in respect of general happiness: for continence is perhaps somewhat dangerous to health, and in any case involves a loss of pleasure considerable in intensity: while at the same time the maintenance of as numerous a population as is desirable in an old society does not require that more than a certain proportion of the women in each generation should become mothers of families: and if some of the surplus thus left make it their profession to enter into casual and temporary sexual relations with men, there is no reason why their lives should compare unfavourably in respect of happiness with those of other women in the less favoured classes of society.

This view has certainly a superficial plausibility: but it ignores the essential fact that it is only by the present severe enforcement of the social sanction against fornication that this is restrained within such limits as not to interfere materially with the due development of the race, and the class of courtezans is kept sufficiently separate from the rest of female society to prevent the contagion of unchastity from spreading. Hence a Utilitarian must maintain this sanction generally, and so must condemn any particular violation of the rule of chastity, even

when, taken by itself, this might not seem to be on the whole infelicific. Though even this latter supposition seems highly improbable: since as long as the social sanction is enforced, the lives of the women against whom society thus issues its ban must, generally speaking, be unhappy from remorse and shame, and the source of unhappiness to others: besides that the breach of any moral rule is *pro tanto* infelicific, from its injurious effects on moral habits generally. And again, the "man of the world" ignores the vast importance to the human race of maintaining that higher type of sexual relations which is not, generally speaking, possible, except where a high value is set upon chastity in both sexes. From this point of view the Virtue of Purity may be regarded as providing a necessary shelter under which that intense and elevated affection between the sexes, which is most conducive both to the happiness of the individual and to the well-being of the family, may grow and flourish.

And in this way we are able to explain what must have perplexed many reflective minds in contemplating the common-sense regulation of conduct under the head of Purity: viz. that on the one hand the sentiment that supports these rules is very intense, so that the subjective difference between right and wrong in this department is marked with peculiar strength: while on the other hand it is found impossible to give a clear definition of the conduct condemned under this notion. For the impulse to be restrained is so powerful and so sensitive to stimulants of all kinds, that in order that the sentiment of purity may adequately perform its protective function, it is necessary that it should be very keen and vivid; and that the aversion to impurity should extend far beyond the acts that primarily need to be prohibited, and include in its scope everything (in dress, language, social customs, &c.) which may tend to excite lascivious ideas. But it is not necessary that a clear and precise theoretical line should be drawn between right and wrong in this matter. Here, as in other cases, it is sufficient for practical purposes if the main central portion of the region of duty be strongly illuminated, while the margin is left somewhat obscure. And, in fact, the detailed regulations which it is important to society to maintain, depend so much upon habit

and association of ideas, that they must vary to a great extent from age to age and from country to country.

§ 7. Here I may conclude the examination of the more important and definite part of the morality of Common Sense, which was undertaken with the view of exhibiting its correspondence, partly obvious and partly latent, with the results of utilitarian reasoning. This survey has supplied us with several illustrations of the manner in which Utilitarianism is naturally introduced as a method for deciding between different conflicting claims, where the Intuitional Method leaves their relative importance obscure: as between the different duties of the affections, and the different kinds of considerations that are elements of the complex notion of Justice: and we have also noticed how, when a dispute is raised as to the precise scope and definition of any current maxim, the felicific or infelicific consequences of formulating the rule in one way or the other, are commonly regarded by the disputants as the ultimate *ratio definiendi*. In fact, these two arguments practically run into one: for it is generally in consequence of a conflict between maxims that we are impressed with the need of giving either a precise definition. We may now observe, further, that the hypothesis of "Unconscious Utilitarianism" explains the different relative importance attached to particular virtues by different classes of human beings, and the different emphasis with which the same virtue is inculcated on these different classes by mankind generally. For such differences ordinarily correspond to variations either real or apparent in the Utilitarian importance of the virtues under different circumstances. Thus we have noticed the greater stress laid on chastity in women than in men: courage, on the other hand, is more valued in the latter, as they are more called upon to cope energetically with sudden and severe dangers. And for similar reasons a soldier is expected to shew a higher degree of courage than (e.g.) a priest. Again, we esteem candour and scrupulous veracity in most persons, but we scarcely look for them in a diplomatist who has to conceal secrets, or in a tradesman describing his goods (for purchasers can find out the defects of what they buy). And we take a more lenient view of bad faith in international than in private relations, because the mutual

confidence already established is so inferior that the breach of a contract gives much less shock to expectation.

Finally, when we compare the different moral codes of different ages and countries, we see that the discrepancies between any two correspond, at least to a great extent, to differences in either the actual consequences of actions, or in the consequences as apprehended in the general view of the society in which the code is maintained. Several instances of this have already been noticed: and the point has been much dwelt upon by Utilitarian writers. But, instead of referring to any of these, I will quote the statements made on this subject by a well-known advocate of the Morality of Common Sense, as his testimony, in so far as it is in favour of Utilitarianism, will be more impressive as being quite involuntary. In considering, says Dugald Stewart[1], "the historical facts which have been adduced to prove that the moral judgments of mankind are entirely factitious,.....it is necessary to make proper allowances (1) for the different situations in which mankind are placed, partly by the diversity in their physical circumstances and partly by the unequal degrees of civilization which they have attained; and (2) for the diversity of their speculative opinions, arising from their unequal measures of knowledge or of capacity." Thus, to use his illustrations, theft is regarded as a very venial offence in the South Sea Islanders, because little or no labour is there required to support life. Again, we find the lending of money for interest very commonly reprehended in societies where commerce is imperfectly developed, because the "usurer" in such communities is commonly a man who is in the odious position of wringing a gain out of the hard necessities of his fellows. Again, where the legal arrangements for punishing crime are imperfect, private murder is either justified or regarded very leniently. Many other examples might be added to these if it were needful. But I conceive that few persons who have studied the subject will deny that there is a general correlation between the variations in the moral code from age to age, and the variations in the real or apprehended effects on general happiness of actions prescribed or forbidden by the code. And in proportion as the apprehension of consequences becomes

[1] *Active and Moral Powers*, B. II. c. 3.

more comprehensive and exact, we may trace not only change but progress in the moral code handed down from age to age: progress which consists in a gradually closer approximation to a perfectly enlightened Utilitarianism. Only we must notice another important factor in the progress, which Stewart has left out of account: the extension, namely, of the capacity for sympathy in an average number of the community. The imperfection of earlier moral codes is at least as much due to defectiveness of sympathy as of intelligence: often, no doubt, the ruder man did not perceive the effects of his conduct on others: but still more often he perceived them, but felt little or no concern about them. Thus it happens that changes in the conscience of a community often correspond to changes in the extent and degree of the sensitiveness of an average member of it to the feelings of others. Of this it is perhaps needless to give particular examples, as the moral revolution wrought by Christianity is one vast and complex illustration of it.

I am not maintaining that this correlation between the development of current morality, and the changes in the consequences of conduct as sympathetically apprehended, is perfect and exact. On the contrary, the history of morality shews us many striking evidences of what, from a Utilitarian point of view, we should consider partial aberrations of the moral sense. But even in these instances we can often discover a germ of unconscious utilitarianism: the aberration is either an exaggeration of an obviously useful sentiment, or the extension of it by mistaken analogy to cases to which it does not properly apply, or perhaps the survival of a sentiment which once was useful, but has now ceased to be so.

Further, it must be observed that I have carefully abstained from asserting that the perception of the rightness of any kind of conduct has always—or even ordinarily—been derived by conscious inference from a perception of consequent advantages. This is perhaps the hypothesis most naturally suggested by such a survey as the preceding, but the evidence of history does not seem to support it. On the contrary, we seem to find, that, as we retrace the stream of ethical thought, the Utilitarian basis of current morality, which I have endeavoured to exhibit in the present chapter, is less and less distinctly per-

ceived. Thus (e.g.) Aristotle sees that the sphere of Courage (*ἀνδρεία*), as recognised by the Common Sense of Greece, is restricted to dangers in war. We can now explain this limitation by a reference to the Utilitarian importance of this kind of courage, at a period of history when the individual's happpiness was bound up more completely than it now is with the welfare of his state, while the very existence of the latter was more frequently imperilled by hostile invasions: but this explanation lies quite beyond the range of Aristotle's own reflection. We can of course obtain no direct historical evidence as to the origin of our moral notions and sentiments: the whole question belongs to those obscure regions of hypothetical history where conjectures roam almost unchecked: but we certainly do not find that, as our retrospect approaches the borders of this realm, Morality begins to shew a greater consciousness of its utilitarian derivation. The admiration felt by a Homeric man for beauties or excellences of character seems to have been as direct and unreflective as his admiration of any other beauty: and the stringency of law and custom in primitive times presents itself as sanctioned by divine rather than by human displeasure. It is therefore not as the mode of regulating conduct with which mankind began, but as that to which we can now see that human development has been always tending, as the adult and not the germinal form of Morality, that Rational Utilitarianism must claim the acceptance of Common Sense [1].

[1] For the sake of strict accuracy, it ought to be admitted that the reference of Common Sense to "Utilitarian considerations," of which I have spoken in several passages of this chapter, is—as was before observed—perhaps commonly conceived as reference to the general "Good" rather than "Happiness." But this admission is practically unimportant. For first, Happiness will be allowed to be the most prominent element in the common notion of Good as applied in this relation: and secondly, in so far as Virtue is included in it as an element distinct from happiness, the general coincidence which we otherwise establish between Virtue and Felicific Quality may obviously be used to reduce—by a sort of method of approximations—the remaining discrepancy between the notions of Good and Happiness (as used by Common Sense in this reference) to a minimum that may be neglected for the purposes of the present argument.

CHAPTER IV.

THE METHOD OF UTILITARIANISM.

§ 1. If, then, we have been led by the arguments given in the preceding chapters, or by any others, to accept the first principle of Utilitarianism as the Supreme Rule of our conduct, it remains to consider generally by what method we shall ascertain in any case the conduct that comes under this rule. The obvious method is that of Empirical Hedonism, discussed in Book II. c. 3. According to this we have in each case to compare all the pleasures and pains that can be foreseen as probable results of the different alternatives of conduct presented to us, and to adopt the alternative which seems likely to lead to the greatest happiness on the whole.

In Book II., however, it appeared that even the more restricted application of this method, which we there had to consider, is involved in much perplexity and uncertainty. Even when an individual is only occupied in forecasting his own pleasures, it seems difficult or impossible for him to avoid errors of considerable magnitude: whether in accurately comparing the pleasantness of his own past feelings, as represented in memory, or in appropriating the experience of others, or in arguing from the past to the future. And these difficulties are obviously much increased when we have to take into account all the effects of our actions, on all the sentient beings who may be affected by them. At the same time, in Book II. we could not find any satisfactory substitute for this method of empirical comparison. It did not appear reasonable to take refuge in the uncriticized beliefs of men in general as to the sources of happiness: indeed, it seemed impossible to extract any clear

and definite *consensus* of opinion from the confused and varying utterances of Common Sense on this subject. Nor again could it be shewn that by giving free play to impulse, or making Self-development his end, the individual would be certain to attain the greatest happiness open to him. Still less could we infer on empirical grounds that this result would always be attained by conformity to the accepted principles of morality. But when we consider these latter in relation, not to the happiness of the individual, but to that of human (or sentient) beings generally, it is clear that the question of harmony between Hedonism and Intuitionism presents *primâ facie* an entirely different aspect. In the preceding chapter has been set forth an array of reasons tending to prove that the morality of Common Sense is unconsciously or instinctively Utilitarian: and from this it is an easy step to the conclusion that in this morality we have ready to hand a body of Utilitarian doctrine. In short, the principles of Common Sense may be regarded as the "middle axioms" of Utilitarianism: so that the two systems would appear in perfect harmony and mutually supplementary. This, as I have said, was the aspect in which Utilitarianism first made its appearance in the development of ethical thought in England. And even our latest expositor of Utilitarian ethics[1], writing after Bentham's breach with Common Sense, seems to hold that the "rules of morality for the multitude" are to be regarded as "positive beliefs of mankind as to the effects of actions on their happiness," and as such are to be provisionally accepted even by "the philosopher." On this view, indeed, we shall still have occasion for direct reference to utilitarian considerations, in order to settle all points upon which the verdict of Common Sense is found to be obscure and conflicting: and in this way, according to the results of the examination conducted in the preceding book, a considerable province will be practically left for the method of Empirical Hedonism: but the long controversy between the advocates of Virtue and the advocates of Happiness will have been finally settled. Such a reconciliation of methods is attractive and plausible: but reflection will, I think, shew that the assumption on which it depends is unwarranted. The

[1] J. S. Mill, *Utilitarianism*, c. 2, p. 35 (3rd Ed.).

"rules of morality" recognised by "the multitude" are certainly not recognised as involving beliefs as to the effect of actions on happiness. They present themselves as the expression of an immediate preference for certain kinds of conduct: and we have no more right to interpret the moral preferences of any society into current opinions as to what promotes general happiness, than we have to identify the appetites, tastes, and inclinations of an individual with his opinions as to what is best for his health. Indeed, the analogy between the two cases seems very close. For the natural and normal end of these instincts is the preservation and well-being of the individual: and undoubtedly the human frame is so constituted that the instinctive desires which any one feels for food, drink, &c., and the habits into which he spontaneously falls in respect of clothing, dress, exercise, &c., have a continual tendency to adapt themselves to his conditions of life: and in so far as they vary in different individuals of different age, sex, employment, &c., or living in different climates, such variation has at least a rough and general correspondence to a variation in the real sanitary needs of such persons. At the same time no one would maintain this correspondence to be more than rough and general, or that individuals are not liable to misleading instincts, and do not fall into unhealthy habits. Similarly, we may hold the conclusion of the preceding chapter, that the normal tendency of our distinctively moral impulses is the preservation and happiness not of ourselves only, but of our fellow-creatures also: we may admit that the *ensemble* of moral habits in any society, the whole system of rules supported in it by common opinion and sentiment, have a continual tendency to adjust themselves to its conditions of social existence, so that they rarely deviate very widely from the habits, rules and sentiments which a perfectly enlightened Utilitarianism would support: and still be led by mere analogy to suppose that this correspondence is only rough and imperfect, and admits of much divergence in detail.

For even if we grant—what is at least highly probable—that this adjustment is brought about by experience, both direct and sympathetic, of the good and bad consequences of actions continually operating to produce secondary likings and aversions for the actions themselves: it still seems hasty to regard the

moral sense as derived entirely from the relics of such experiences. In the theory of its derivation put forward by one of the most penetrating and ingenious of English moralists[1], considerable prominence is given to another element, which has to be carefully distinguished from the one just mentioned: our sympathy, namely, not with the feelings that result from actions, but with the impulses that prompt them. Indeed, Adam Smith assigns to this operation of sympathy,—the echo (as it were) of each agent's passion in the breast of unconcerned spectators,—the first place in determining our approval and disapproval of actions: sympathy with the effect of his conduct on others he treats as a secondary element, correcting and qualifying the more immediate and primary feeling. However this may be, there are certainly many cases where the resulting moral consciousness seems to indicate a balance or compromise between the two kinds of sympathy: and if the active impulse is malevolent or otherwise infelicific, the compromise may be many degrees removed from the rule which Utilitarianism would prescribe[2].

But even if we accept unreservedly the hypothesis of the derivation of the moral sense from memory and imagination of pleasures and pains; we find when we examine this hypothesis more closely that (besides the general analogical argument above noticed) there are many special grounds for suspecting that traditional morality will afford but imperfect guidance to the attainment of the Utilitarian end. The hypothesis, in its completest form, would seem to be this: that the experience of each member of the human community impresses itself on the consciousness of others, partly by their

[1] Adam Smith.

[2] [illegible] on the penal codes of primitive communities, both [illegible] of the punishments inflicted for homicide, and by the [illegible] penalties allotted to the same crime according [illegible] act or not. "It is curious to observe," says [illegible] "how completely the men of primitive times [illegible] of the injured person were the proper measure [illegible] to exact, and how literally they imitated the [illegible] passions in fixing the scale of punishment." And even in more civilised societies there is a very common feeling of uncertainty as to the propriety of inflicting punishment for crimes committed long ago, which seems traceable to the same source.

direct sympathy with his pleasures and pains, and partly through their regard for his gratitude and resentment, goodwill and hatred, and their consequences; that these impressions are retained and accumulated, and confirmed and kept from divergence by the mutual sympathy of all: that their effects are transmitted from generation to generation, partly by physical inheritance, and partly by tradition from parents to children, and imitation of adults by the young: and that thus common likings or (aversions) for conduct that affects pleasurably (or painfully) the community generally or some part of it, are gradually developed, till they become what we now know as the moral sentiments. Now it is obvious that the accuracy with which impulses thus produced will guide us to the general happiness must depend upon the accuracy with which the whole sum of pleasurable and painful consequences to sentient beings, resulting from any course of action, has been represented in the consciousness of an average member of the community. And it is seen at a glance that this representation has been always liable to errors of great magnitude, from causes that were partly noticed in the previous chapter, when we were considering the progress of morality. We have to allow, first, for limitation of sympathy; since in every age and country the sympathy of an average man with other sentient beings, and even his egoistic regard for their likings and aversions, has been much more limited than the influence of his actions on the feelings of others. We must allow further for limitation of intelligence: for in all ages men have had a very inadequate knowledge of natural sequences: so that such indirect consequences of conduct as have been felt have been frequently traced to wrong causes, and been met by wrong moral remedies, owing to imperfect apprehension of the relation of means to ends. We must allow again for the influences of false religions: for whenever the fictitious pleasures and displeasures of deities have constituted an important part of the represented consequences of conduct, the resulting moral sentiments are liable to have been perverted to a corresponding extent. This suggests a further deflection, due to the sensibilities of religious teachers influencing the code of duty accepted by their followers, in points where these

sensibilities were not normal and representative, but exceptional and idiosyncratic[1].

Again, analogy would lead us to expect that however completely adapted the moral instincts of a community may be at some particular time to a certain set of circumstances and conditions, any rapid change of circumstances would tend to derange the adaptation, from survival of instincts formerly useful, which thus suddenly become useless or pernicious. And indeed, apart from any changes in external circumstances, and merely from the operation of some internal law of development, it might happen that the most completely organized experience of human happiness in the past would guide us but imperfectly to the right means of making it a maximum in the future. And if, when we turn from these abstract considerations to history and examine the actual morality of other ages and countries, we find that, considered as an instrument for producing general happiness, it continually exhibits imperfections arising from these or other causes; there is surely a strong presumption that there are similar imperfections to be discovered in our own moral code, though habit and familiarity prevent them from being obvious.

Finally we have to observe that the discrepancies which we find when we compare the moralities of different ages and countries, exist to some extent side by side in the morality of any one society at any given time. We discover on examination that there is scarcely any department of conduct in reference to which some respectable section of the community is not found to diverge from the received moral code, both in a positive and a negative direction. Now in the preceding chapters it has been observed that Utilitarianism is necessarily appealed to for decision, whenever such divergent opinions are entertained by a minority so large, that we cannot fairly regard the dogma of the majority as the plain utter-

[1] No doubt this influence is confined within strict limits: no authority can permanently impose on men regulations flagrantly infelicific: and the most practically originative of religious teachers have produced their effect chiefly by giving new force and vividness to sentiments already existing (and recognised as properly authoritative) in the society upon which they acted. Still, it would have made a great difference to the human race if (e.g.) Mohammed had been fond of wine, and indifferent to women.

ance of Common Sense. But a smaller minority than this, particularly if composed of persons of enlightenment and special acquaintance with the effects of the conduct judged, may reasonably inspire us with distrust of Common Sense: just as in the more technical parts of practice we prefer the judgment of a few trained experts to the instincts of the vulgar. And so we are forced back on the method of pure empirical Utilitarianism, which thus must practically tend to submerge the Intuitional method, however we may still maintain the general harmony between the two. Yet again, a contemplation of these divergent codes and their relation to the different circumstances in which men live, suggests a conclusion profoundly opposed to the convictions of Common-Sense, and yet quite in harmony with the general reasoning by which it is proposed to reconcile Intuitional and Utilitarian Ethics: namely that Common-Sense morality is really only adapted for ordinary men in ordinary circumstances—although it may still be expedient that these ordinary persons should regard it as absolutely and universally prescribed, since any other view of it may dangerously weaken its hold over their minds. In this case we must use the Utilitarian method to ascertain how far persons in special circumstances require a morality more specially adapted to them than Common Sense is willing to concede: and also how far men of peculiar physical or mental constitution ought to be exempted from ordinary rules, as has sometimes been claimed for men of genius, or men of intensely emotional nature, or men gifted with more than usual prudence and self-control.

Lastly, it is important to notice, that besides the large amount of divergence that exists between the moral instincts of different classes and individuals, there is often a discrepancy between the moral instincts of any class or individual, and such Utilitarian reasonings as their untrained intellects are in the habit of conducting. There are many things in conduct which many people think right but not expedient, or at least which they would not think expedient if they had not first judged them to be right: in so far as they reason from experience only, their conclusions as to what conduces to the general happiness are opposed to their moral intuitions. It may be

said that this results generally from a hasty and superficial consideration of expediency; and that the discrepancy would disappear after a deeper and completer examination of the consequences of actions. And I do not deny that this would often be the case: but this is only a further argument for a comprehensive and systematic application of the method of pure empirical Utilitarianism.

We must conclude, then, that we cannot take the moral rules of Common Sense as expressing the *consensus* of competent judges, up to the present time, as to the kind of conduct which is likely to produce the greatest amount of happiness on the whole. It would rather seem that it is the unavoidable duty of a systematic Utilitarianism to make a thorough revision of these rules, in order to ascertain how far the causes previously enumerated (and perhaps others) have actually operated to produce a divergence between Common Sense and a perfectly Utilitarian code of morality.

§ 2. But in thus stating the problem we are assuming that the latter term of this comparison can be satisfactorily defined and sufficiently developed: that we can frame with adequate precision a system of rules, constituting the true moral code for human beings as deduced from Utilitarian principles. And this seems to be commonly assumed by the school whose method we are now examining. But when we set ourselves in earnest to the construction of such a system, we find it beset with serious difficulties. For, passing over the uncertainties involved in hedonistic comparison generally, let us suppose that the *quantum* of happiness that will result from the establishment of any plan of behaviour among human beings can be ascertained with sufficient exactness for practical purposes: and that even when the plan is as yet constructed in imagination alone. It still has to be asked, What is the nature of the human being for whom we are to construct this hypothetical scheme of conduct? For humanity is not something that exhibits the same properties always and everywhere: whether we consider the intellect of man or his feelings, or his physical condition and circumstances, we find them so different in different ages and countries, that it seems *primâ facie* absurd to lay down a set of ideal Utilitarian rules for mankind generally. It may be

said that these differences after all relate chiefly to details: and that there is in any case sufficient uniformity in the nature and circumstances of human life always and everywhere to render possible an outline ideal of behaviour for mankind at large. But it must be observed, that it is with details that we are now principally concerned: for the previous discussion has sufficiently shewn that the conduct approved by Common Sense has a *general* resemblance to that which Utilitarianism would prescribe: but we wish to ascertain more exactly how far the resemblance extends, and with what delicacy and precision the current moral rules are adapted to the actual needs and conditions of human life.

Suppose, then, that we contract the scope of the investigation, and only endeavour to ascertain the rules appropriate to man as we know him, in our own age and country. But the man that we know is a being who recognises more or less definitely a certain moral code: and it is obvious that this element of his actual nature must not be included in our conception of him as a being for whom a code is yet to be constructed *de novo*. But if we take an actual man—or, say, an average Englishman—and abstract his morality, what remains is an entity so purely hypothetical, that it is not clear what practical purpose can be served by constructing a system of moral rules for a community of such beings. No doubt if we might assume that the scientific deduction of such a system would ensure its general acceptance: if we could reasonably expect to convert all mankind at once to Utilitarian principles, or even all educated and reflective mankind, so that all preachers and teachers should take universal happiness as the goal of their efforts as unquestioningly as physicians take the health of the individual body: and if we could be sure that men's moral habits and sentiments would adjust themselves at once and without any waste of force to these changed rules, then perhaps in framing the Utilitarian code we might fairly leave existing morality out of account. But since we are not warranted in making these suppositions: since we have to take the moral habits, impulses, and tastes of men as a material given us to work upon no less than the rest of their nature, and as something which, as it only partly results from reasoning in the past, so can only be partially

modified by any reasoning which we can now apply to it: then surely the solution of the hypothetical Utilitarian problem above stated will not give us the result which we practically require.

It will perhaps be said, "No doubt such an ideal Utilitarian morality can only be gradually, and perhaps after all imperfectly, introduced: but still it will be useful to work it out as a pattern to which we may approximate." But, in the first place, it is not yet proved that we can approximate to it. It is always possible that an existing moral rule, though not the ideally best even for such beings as existing men under the existing circumstances, is yet the best that they can be got to obey: and that it would be futile to propose any other: or even harmful, as it might tend to impair old moral habits without effectively replacing them by new ones. And secondly, we may fairly ask, Why should we try to approximate to just this pattern? for such an attempt only seems to be the best means of promoting human happiness if we make the assumption that man cannot be importantly improved, in his capacities for happiness and his power of attaining it, except so far as his morality is concerned: that the other elements of his nature and condition must be taken as substantially unchangeable. But if this is not the case: if, on the contrary, the state of men's knowledge and intellectual faculties, and the range of their sympathies, and the direction and strength of their prevailing impulses, and their relations to the external world and to each other, are continually being altered, and such alteration is to some extent under our control: then the endeavour gradually to approximate to a morality constructed on the supposition that the non-moral part of existing human nature is constant, may lead us quite wrong. In short, the Utilitarian is placed in this dilemma:—The nature of man, intellectual and impulsive, and the conditions of his life, are continually being changed, and it seems illegitimate to assume them constant, unless we are confining our attention to the immediate present: but, again, if we are considering them in the immediate present, we must take into account men's moral habits and sentiments, as a part of their nature only somewhat more modifiable than the rest.

It seems, therefore, impossible to construct an absolute code of Utilitarian Morality, unless we can shew that there is some final perfect form of society, towards which the process of human history is tending: and it seems unprofitable to contemplate any extensive modification of existing positive morality, except in connexion with other social changes which we foresee as likely to be brought about, whether through the deliberate efforts of enlightened Utilitarians, or from other causes.

Now in the present rudimentary condition of sociology it does not appear to me that we have sufficient data for deducing the best rules of mutual behaviour for human communities, as they are to exist at some future period. And, therefore, I should judge, from a strictly Utilitarian point of view, that any attempt, such as Bentham made, to dispense with the morality of instinct and tradition, would be premature and ill-advised. I think that for the present, at any rate, the Utilitarian method must start with the existing social order, and the existing morality as a part of that order: and in deciding the question whether any divergence from this code is to be recommended, must consider chiefly the immediate consequences of such divergence, upon a society in which such a code is conceived generally to subsist. No doubt a thoughtful and well-instructed Utilitarian may see dimly a certain way ahead, and his attitude towards existing morality may be to some extent modified by what he sees. He may discern in the future certain evils impending, which can only be effectually warded off by the adoption of new and more stringent views of duty in certain departments: while, on the other hand, he may see a prospect of social changes which will render a relaxation of other parts of the moral code expedient or inevitable. But if he keeps within the limits that separate scientific prevision from fanciful Utopian conjecture, the form of society to which his practical conclusions relate will be one varying but little from the actual, with its actually established code of moral rules and customary judgments as to Virtue and Vice.

CHAPTER V.

THE METHOD OF UTILITARIANISM CONTINUED.

§ 1. If, then, we are to regard the morality of Common Sense as a machinery of rules, habits, and sentiments, roughly and generally but not precisely or completely adapted to the production of the greatest possible happiness for sentient beings generally; and if, on the other hand, we have to accept it as the actually established machinery for attaining this end, which we cannot replace at once by any other, but can only gradually modify; it remains to consider the practical effects of the complex and balanced relation in which a rational Utilitarian thus seems to stand to the Positive Morality of his age and country.

Generally speaking, he will clearly conform to it, and endeavour to promote its development in others. For, though the imperfection that we find in all the actual conditions of human existence—we may even say in the universe at large as judged from a human point of view—is ultimately found even in Morality itself, in so far as this is contemplated as Positive: still, practically, we are much less concerned with correcting and improving than we are with realizing and enforcing it. The rational Utilitarian must repudiate altogether that temper of rebellion against the established morality, as something purely external and conventional, into which the reflective mind is always apt to fall when it is first convinced that its rules are not intrinsically reasonable. He must, of course, also repudiate as superstitious that awe of it as an absolute or Divine Code which Intuitional moralists inculcate[1]. Still, he will naturally con-

[1] At the same time this sentiment, which Kant among others has expressed with peculiar force (*Kritik der prakt. Vern.* Beschluss) is in no way incompatible

template it with reverence and wonder, as a marvellous product of nature, the result of long centuries of growth, shewing in many parts the same fine adaptation of means to complex exigencies as the most elaborate structures of physical organisms exhibit: he will handle it with respectful delicacy as a mechanism, constructed of the fluid element of opinions and dispositions, by the indispensable aid of which the actual *quantum* of human happiness is continually being produced: a mechanism which no "politicians or philosophers" could create, yet without which the harder and coarser machinery of Positive Law could not be permanently maintained, and the life of man would become—as Hobbes forcibly expresses it—"solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short."

Still, as this actual moral order is admittedly imperfect, it will be the Utilitarian's duty to aid in improving it. The question therefore arises, Under what circumstances and by what method will he attempt to modify or supplement it? Here our investigation seems to leave, after all, as the only possible method—until the science of Sociology shall have been really constructed—that of pure empirical Hedonism. The Utilitarian must represent as accurately as possible the total amount of pleasure and pain that may be expected to result respectively from conformity or disobedience to any given rule; and adopt the alternative which seems to promise the greatest balance of pleasure over pain. That this method is liable to the most serious errors, and this comparison must generally be of the roughest and vaguest kind, we have already seen[1]; and it is highly important to bear this in mind: but yet we seem unable to find any substitute for it.

It is not meant, of course, that each individual is left to his own unassisted judgment: there is a mass of traditional experience, which each individual imbibes orally or from books, as to the effects of conduct upon happiness; but the general formulæ in which this experience is transmitted are, for the most part, so indefinite, the proper range of their application so uncertain, and the observation and induction on which they are founded

with Utilitarianism: only it must be reserved for the Utilitarian First Principle—which in fact, as we have seen, is the first principle of Kantism.

[1] Cf. B. II. c. 3.

so uncritical, that they stand in continual need of further empirical verification; especially as regards their applicability to any particular case. We may observe that it is by this empirical method that every rational agent is supposed to determine at least a large part of his conduct. For it is always assumed by Common Sense that each individual will try to get as much happiness as he can for himself within the limits which morality lays down, and that a good man will do the same for other human beings, according to the relations in which they stand to him: and that he will do this by combining in some way his own experience with that of other men as to the felicific and infelicific effects of actions. And it is actually in this way that each man usually deliberates (e.g.) what profession to choose for himself, or what mode of education for his children, whether to aim at marriage or remain single, whether to settle in town or country, in England or abroad. No doubt there are, as we saw[1], other ends besides Happiness, such as Knowledge, Beauty, &c., commonly recognised as *per se* desirable: but it appeared that Common Sense on reflection would only regard them as desirable in so far as they were directly or ultimately sources of happiness (although it may be desirable that they should still be sought *per se*, as the happiness arising from them would be diminished if they were consciously sought as means to it). For though men have devoted their lives (e.g.) to attainment of knowledge, without considering its relation to their own happiness or to that of others: still, we do not seem to regard such devotion as rational, except on the ground that human happiness is, on the whole, increased by it. And where the attainment of knowledge involves an obvious sacrifice of happiness in other ways, as in the physiological researches where it cannot be attained without causing pain, or when it is proposed to support investigators out of the taxes; the practical question whether the pursuit of knowledge ought to be allowed or maintained under the circumstances in question, seems always decided by an application, however rough and confused, of the method of pure empirical Hedonism.

In so far then as Rational Conduct is conceived to be a pursuit of what our older moralists called "Natural Good,"

[1] Cf. B. III. c. 14.

i. e. of all that is intrinsically desirable *except* Virtue or Morality, within the limits fixed by the latter: there seems to be no fundamental difference between Utilitarianism and Common Sense. The Utilitarian only performs somewhat more consistently and systematically the reasoning processes which all admit to be properly decisive of the questions that this pursuit raises. His distinctive characteristic, as a Utilitarian, is that he has to apply the same method to the criticism and correction of the limiting morality itself. The particulars of this criticism will obviously be relative to the special changes that are continually occurring in man's nature and circumstances. We have here only to discuss the general points of view which must be taken in such a criticism, in order that no important class of relevant considerations may be omitted.

§ 2. Let us first recall the distinction previously noticed[1] between the jural and æsthetic aspects of morality. As we saw, the difference between right conduct, duty, that to which a man is bound or obliged, and good, praiseworthy, excellent conduct, is, as often used, purely formal: it indicates two different points of view from which all morality may be contemplated. But as employed by Common Sense, the distinction is also partly material, and the two notions are to some extent applied to different kinds of conduct: as there are certain rules which a man is thought to be bound to obey under penalties, and is not praised for obeying, and beyond these again there is an ideal which he is admired for realizing, though he is not blamed for falling short of it. In considering, then, the relation of Utilitarianism to the moral judgments of Common Sense, it will be convenient to begin with the former element of current morality, as the more important and indispensable: the *ensemble* of rules of duty imposed by common opinion in any society. We have here a kind of unwritten legislation, supplementary to Law proper, and enforced by different penalties, the disfavour and contempt of society; penalties which in most cases are actually inflicted only by a limited number of its members, but potentially by the whole or an overwhelming majority or the more esteemed portion of them, whose opinion the limited number is believed

[1] Cf. Bk. I. c. 9, and Bk. III. c. 2.

to represent. This legislation, as it does not emanate from a definite body of persons acting in a corporate capacity, obviously cannot be altered by any formal deliberations and resolutions of the persons on whose *consensus* it rests. Any change in it must therefore result from the private action of individuals, whether determined by impulse and sentiment or (as we at present suppose) by Utilitarian considerations. It should be observed that the practical Utilitarian problem is often complicated by the conflict and divergence which is found to a certain extent in all societies between the moral opinions of different sections of the community. This, as we have already noticed, sometimes even results in the distinct establishment of a rival code—as in the case of the Law of Honour. But however far this divergence goes there is always a considerable body of moral law common to the diverging codes: and it will be convenient to confine our attention to this in the first instance.

Suppose then that after considering the consequences of any such rule, really supported by "Common Consent," a Utilitarian comes to the conclusion that a different rule would be more conducive to the general happiness, if similarly established in a society remaining in other respects the same as at present—or in one slightly different (in so far as our forecast of social changes can be made sufficiently clear to furnish any basis for practice). And first we will suppose that this new rule differs from the old one not only positively but negatively: that it does not merely go beyond and include it, but actually conflicts with it. Before he can decide that it is right for him (i.e. conducive to the general happiness) to regulate his conduct by the new rule, he ought to estimate the force of certain disadvantages necessarily attendant upon such innovations, which may conveniently be arranged under the following heads.

In the first place, as his own happiness is a part of the universal end at which he aims, he must consider the importance to himself of the penalties of social disapprobation which he will incur. But further, in most cases it will not be his own happiness alone that will be thus affected, as all who are closely connected with him will suffer to some extent from

the disfavour thus falling upon him. And again, he has to take into account, besides the immediate pain of this disapprobation, its indirect effect in diminishing his power of serving society and promoting the general happiness in other ways.

It may be said that if the innovation be beneficial, any social persecution which the innovator may have to undergo should not be taken into account; because this is the regular price that must always be paid for such innovations, and if we stop progress on this ground we stop it altogether. And it must be admitted that some pain of this kind must necessarily attend any changes in current morality, in the negative or destructive direction. But here, as in many Utilitarian calculations, everything depends on the quantity of the effects produced: which in the case supposed may vary very much, from slight distrust and disfavour to severe condemnation and social exclusion. It often seems that by attempting change prematurely an innovator may incur the severest form of the moral penalty, whereas if he had waited a few years he would have been let off with the mildest. For the hold which a moral rule has over the general mind commonly begins to decay from the time that it is seen to be opposed to the calculations of expediency: and it may be better for the community as well as for the individual that it should not be openly attacked, until this process of decay has reached a certain point.

It is, however, of more importance to consider whether the apparent improvement will really have a beneficial effect on others. For perhaps the new rule, though it would be more felicific than the old one, if it could get itself equally established, may be not so likely to be adopted, or if adopted, not so likely to be obeyed, by the mass of the community in which it is proposed to innovate. It may be too subtle and refined, or too complex and elaborate: it may require a greater intellectual development, or a higher degree of self-control, or a different quality or balance of feelings, than is to be found in an average member of the community. Nor can it be said in reply, that by the hypothesis the innovator's example must be good to whatever extent it operates, since *pro tanto* it tends to

substitute a better rule for a worse. For experience seems to shew that an example of this kind is more likely to be potent negatively than positively: that here, as elsewhere in human affairs, it is easier to pull down than to build up: easier to weaken or destroy the restraining force that a moral rule, habitually and generally obeyed, has over men's minds, than to substitute for it a new restraining habit, not similarly sustained by tradition and custom. Hence the effect of an example intrinsically good may be on the whole bad, owing to its destructive operation being more vigorous than its constructive. And again, such destructive effect must be considered not only in respect of the particular rule violated, but of all other rules. For just as the breaking of any one Law (proper) has an inevitable tendency to encourage lawlessness generally, so the violation of any generally recognised moral rule seems to give a certain aid to the forces that are always tending towards moral anarchy in any society.

Nor must we neglect the reaction which any breach with customary morality will have on the agent's own mind. For the regulative habits and sentiments which each man has received by inheritance or training constitute an important force impelling his will, in the main, to conduct such as his reason would dictate: a natural auxiliary, as it were, to Reason in its conflict with seductive passions and appetites: and it may be practically dangerous to impair the strength of these auxiliaries. On the other hand, it would seem that the habit of acting rationally is the best of all habits, and that it ought to be the aim of a reasonable being to bring all his impulses and sentiments into more and more perfect harmony with Reason. And indeed when a man has earnestly accepted any moral principle, those of his pre-existing regulative habits and sentiments that are not supported by deductions from this principle tend naturally to decay and disappear, and it would perhaps be scarcely worth while to take them into account, except for the support that they derive from the sympathy of others.

But this last is a consideration of great importance. For the moral impulses of each individual commonly draw the chief part of their strength from the sympathy of other human beings. This effect must not be confounded—though

it is closely connected—with that of the pleasures and pains that each derives from the moral likings and aversions of others: it is the direct sympathetic echo in each man of the judgments and sentiments of others concerning conduct, sustaining his own similar judgments and sentiments. We have, however, to consider the pleasures and pains just mentioned, not merely as elements of the sum of happiness which constitutes the Utilitarian end, but also as natural forces operating (along with the more direct effects of moral sympathy) to keep the conduct of each individual in general harmony with the interests of society. Through this twofold operation of sympathy it becomes practically much easier for most men to conform to a moral rule established in the society to which they belong than to one made by themselves. And any act by which a man weakens the effect on himself of this general moral sympathy tends *pro tanto* to make the performance of duty more difficult for him.

On the other hand, we have to take into account—besides the intrinsic gain of the particular change—the general advantage of offering to mankind a striking example of consistent Utilitarianism: since, in this case as in others, a man gives a stronger proof of genuine conviction by conduct in opposition to public opinion than he can by conformity. In order, however, that this effect may be produced, it is almost necessary that the non-conformity should not promote the innovator's personal convenience: for in that case it will almost certainly be attributed to egoistic motives, however plausible the Utilitarian deduction of its rightness may seem.

The exact force of these various considerations will differ indefinitely in different cases: and it does not seem profitable to attempt any general estimate of them. For the practical decision must, it seems, be determined almost entirely by the extent to which the innovator has reason to expect that his example will be followed by others. For the actual benefit of the change depends of course upon the extent to which it is actually carried out: but at the same time its counterbalancing evils will be increased, in so far as the example affects those for whom the new rule is not really suitable: while, again, the undesirable consequences springing from the breach of sym-

pathy between the innovator and other moral persons will be correspondingly decreased. But on the whole it would seem that the general arguments which we have noticed constitute an important check upon Utilitarian innovations on Common Sense morality, of the negative or destructive kind.

If now we consider such innovations as are merely positive and supplementary, and consist in adding a new rule to those already established by Common Sense; it will appear that there is really no collision of methods, so far as the Utilitarian's own observance of the new rule is concerned. For, as every such rule is, *ex hypothesi*, believed by him to be conducive to the common good, he is merely giving a special and stricter interpretation to the general duty of Universal Benevolence, where Common Sense leaves it loose and indeterminate. Hence the restraining considerations above enumerated do not apply to this case. And whatever it is right for him to do himself, it is obviously right for him to approve in and recommend to other persons in similar circumstances. But it is a different question whether he ought to seek to impose his new rule on others, by express condemnation of all who are not prepared to adopt it: as this involves not only the immediate evil of the annoyance given to others, but also the further danger of weakening the general good effect of his moral example, through the reaction provoked by this aggressive attitude. Here again his decision ought probably to depend on the prospect, as far as he can estimate it, that his innovation has of meeting with support and sympathy from others.

It should be observed, however, that a great part of the reform in popular morality, which a consistent Utilitarian will try to introduce, will probably lie not so much in establishing new rules (whether conflicting with the old or merely supplementary) as in enforcing old ones. For there is always a considerable part of morality in the condition of receiving formal respect and acceptance, while yet it is not really sustained by any effective force of public opinion: and the difference between the moralities of any two societies is often more strikingly exhibited in the different emphasis attached to various portions of the moral code in each, than in disagreement as to the whole sum of rules which the code should include.

In the case we are considering, it is chiefly conduct which shews a want of comprehensive sympathy or of public spirit, to which the Utilitarian will desire to attach a severer condemnation than is at present directed against it. There is much conduct of this sort, of which the immediate effect is to give obvious pleasure to individuals, while the far greater amount of harm that it more remotely and indirectly causes is but dimly recognised by Common Sense. Such conduct, therefore, even when it is allowed to be wrong, is very mildly treated by common opinion: especially when it is prompted by some impulse not self-regarding, and does not violate any express rule, but only a tacit understanding. Still, in all such cases, we do not require the promulgation of any new moral doctrine, but merely a bracing and sharpening of the moral sentiments of society, to bring them into harmony with the greater comprehensiveness of view and the more impartial concern for human happiness which characterize the Utilitarian system.

§ 3. We have hitherto supposed that the innovator is endeavouring to introduce a new rule of conduct, not for himself only, but for others also, as more conducive to the general happiness than the rule recognised by Common Sense. It may perhaps be thought that this is not the issue most commonly raised between Utilitarianism and Common Sense: but rather whether exceptions should be allowed to rules which both sides agree to be generally valid. For no one doubts that it is, *generally speaking*, conducive to the common happiness that men should be veracious, faithful to promises, obedient to law, disposed to satisfy the normal expectations of others, having their malevolent impulses and their sensual appetites under strict control: but it is thought that an exclusive regard to pleasurable and painful consequences would frequently admit exceptions to rules which Common Sense imposes as absolute. Here, however, we must observe that the admission of an exception on general grounds is merely the establishment of a more complex and delicate rule, instead of one that is broader and simpler: for if it is conducive to the general good that the exception be admitted in one case, it will be equally so in all similar cases. Let us take an illustration of some present interest. Suppose a Utilitarian is asked how he voted in the

recent election (1874). If he wishes to conceal his vote he may easily think it expedient and right to answer falsely: for the Utilitarian reasons against falsehood generally are, (1) the immediate harm done by misleading a particular individual, and (2) the tendency which each falsehood has to diminish the mutual confidence that men ought to have in each other's assertions. But in this exceptional case it may be expedient that the questioner should be misled: and, in so far as the falsehood tends to produce a general distrust of all affirmations about voting, it only furthers the end for which voting has been made secret. It is evident, however, that if these reasons are valid for any person, they are valid for all persons: in fact that they establish the expediency of a new general rule in respect of truth and falsehood, more complicated than the old one: a rule which the Utilitarian, as such, desires to be universally obeyed.

There are, of course, some kinds of moral innovation which, from the nature of the case, are not likely to occur frequently: as where Utilitarian reasoning leads a man to take part in a political revolution, or to support a public measure in opposition to what Common Sense regards as Justice or Good Faith. Still, in such cases a Utilitarian usually proceeds on general principles, which he would desire all persons in similar circumstances to carry into effect.

There is, however, another kind of exceptions, differing fundamentally from this, which Utilitarianism seems to admit: where the agent does not think it expedient that the rule on which he himself acts should be *universally* adopted, and yet maintains that his individual act is right, as producing a greater balance of pleasure over pain than any other conduct open to him would produce.

And certainly we cannot argue that because a large aggregate of acts would cause more harm than good, therefore any single act of the kind will produce this effect. It may even be a straining of language to say that it has a *tendency* to produce it: no one (e.g.) would say that because an army walking over a bridge would break it down, therefore the crossing of a single traveller has a tendency to destroy it. And just as a prudent physician in giving rules of diet recommends an occasional deviation from them, as more conducive to

the health of the body than absolute regularity: so there may be rules of social behaviour of which the general observance is necessary to the well-being of the community, while yet a certain amount of non-observance is rather advantageous than otherwise.

Here, however, we seem brought into conflict with Kant's fundamental principle, that a right action must be one which the agent could desire to be done by all persons under similar circumstances: and yet it was argued (B. III. c. 1, and c. 13), that this was a necessary truth involved in the very idea of right conduct. And it certainly seems to me such: only, (as was noticed in B. III. c. 7, in the particular case of veracity,) we must admit a qualification of this rule, which importantly modifies its practical application: we must include among relevant "circumstances" the belief (supposing it to exist) that the action will not be widely imitated. In short, the Kantian principle means no more than that no act can be right for me "because I am I": if right for me, it must be right on general grounds and therefore for some class of persons: but there is no reason why this class should not be defined by the above-mentioned characteristic of believing that the act will remain an exceptional one. Of course if this belief turns out to be erroneous, serious harm may possibly result: but the same may be said of many other Utilitarian deductions: an action that was thought to be conducive to the general happiness may turn out to be very detrimental to it, owing to an erroneous forecast of consequences.

This reasoning may seem somewhat sophistical: but in fact it is very easy to find instances of conduct which is commonly thought to be legitimate solely on the ground that we have no fear of its being too widely imitated. Take, for example, the case of Celibacy. A universal refusal to propagate the human species would be the greatest of conceivable crimes from a Utilitarian point of view: that is, according to the commonly accepted belief in the superiority of human happiness to that of other animals: and hence the Kantian principle, applied without the qualification above given, would make it a crime in any one to devote himself to celibacy. But Common Sense (in the present age at least) regards celi-

bacy as within the limits of right conduct: because there is no fear that population will not be sufficiently kept up, as in fact the tendency to propagate is thought to exist rather in excess than otherwise.

In this case it is a non-moral impulse—the sexual instinct—on the average strength of which we think we may reckon: but there does not appear to be any formal or universal reason why the same procedure should not be applied by Utilitarians to an actually existing moral sentiment. Thus there would be a discrepancy between Utilitarianism and Common-Sense morality of a very curious kind: as it is the very firmness with which the latter is established which becomes the rational ground for relieving the individual of its obligations. *A* and *B* are supposed to see that the happiness of the community will be enhanced (just as the excellence of a metrical composition is) by a slight admixture of irregularity along with a general observance of rules: that is, by a little of what is commonly blamed as vice, along with a great deal of what is commonly recommended as virtue: and convinced that others will supply the virtue, *A* and *B* think themselves justified, on Utilitarian grounds, in supplying the vice.

It does not seem to me that this reasoning can be shewn to be necessarily unsound, and therefore it is important to call attention to this point, as constituting a real peculiarity of the Utilitarian method. It should be observed, however, that it makes a great difference whether the sentiment in mankind generally, on which one relies to sustain sufficiently a general rule while constituting oneself an exception thereto, is moral or non-moral: because the strength of the former sentiment depends so much more than the latter on a consciousness of general sympathy: and is therefore much more sensitive to example, and much more likely to be impaired by any known violation of the general rule. Hence the cases seem at least very rare, in which a really conscientious person could think that his own violation of a rule, of which the *general* (though not *universal*) observance is plainly expedient, will not probably do harm on the whole. Especially as all the objections to innovation, noticed in the previous section, apply with increased force to the cases in which the inno-

vator does not even claim to be introducing a new and better general rule.

It must be admitted, too, that it would be extremely dangerous to practical morality to proclaim that any individual may exempt himself from obedience to certain moral rules, if only he is sufficiently convinced that other persons will obey them. But we are not now inquiring what ought to be generally proclaimed, but what it may accord with Utilitarian theory to do, under certain circumstances. And we must now observe this may easily be different from what it is expedient to teach: since a man's teaching affects different persons from those who are influenced by his example, and in a different way. Similarly we shall have to admit that it may in some cases be right to teach one set of persons what it would be wrong to teach others: and thus the Romanist view of the "economy" to be observed in the distribution of truth, seems to be strictly in harmony with Utilitarian principles. So again, in so far as the harm of an act consists chiefly in its bad example, it may on Utilitarian principles be right if it can be done with perfect secresy, but not otherwise. On both these points Utilitarianism is manifestly at issue with Common Sense: for the very notion of the latter involves the repudiation of an esoteric morality, differing from that popularly taught[1]: and an action which would be bad if done openly is not commonly thought to be rendered good by secresy. We may observe however that for this latter opinion in its turn a latent Utilitarian basis may be found: for there is an obvious advantage, generally speaking, in acts which it is expedient to repress by social disapprobation becoming known, as otherwise the disapprobation cannot operate: so that it seems inexpedient to support by any moral encouragement the natural disposition of men in general to conceal their wrong doings. Thus the Utilitarian conclusion, carefully stated, would seem to be this: that the opinion that secresy

[1] At the same time it must be allowed that the doctrine of "economy" is tacitly recognised by Common Sense to a certain extent. For example, in countries where there is a danger of serious political disturbance it is commonly considered criminal to publish in newspapers opinions which may be published in books without offence.

may render an action right which would not otherwise be so should itself be kept comparatively secret: and similarly it seems expedient that the doctrine that esoteric morality is expedient should itself be kept esoteric. Or if this concealment be difficult to maintain, it may be desirable that Common Sense should repudiate the doctrines which it is expedient to confine to an enlightened few. And thus a Utilitarian may reasonably desire, on Utilitarian principles, that some of his conclusions should be rejected by mankind generally: or even that the vulgar should keep aloof from his system as a whole, in so far as the inevitable indefiniteness and complexity of its calculations render it likely to lead to bad results in their hands.

Of course in an ideal community of enlightened Utilitarians this swarm of puzzles and paradoxes would vanish: as in such a society no one can have any ground for believing that persons in circumstances similar to his own will act in a manner different from that which he adopts. And any enlightened Utilitarian must of course desire this consummation; as all conflict of moral opinion must *pro tanto* be regarded as an evil, as tending to impair the force of morality generally in its resistance to seductive impulses. Still such conflict may be a necessary evil in the actual condition of civilised communities, in which there are so many different degrees of intellectual and moral development. And if so, such reasonings as those which we have just gone through must necessarily have a place in the practical consideration of a question discussed in the previous section: viz. how far we ought to attempt—by precept or example—to introduce a new rule of conduct which would be better than that now currently accepted if persons would only act up to it, but which is perhaps less likely to obtain a practical hold over ordinary men. For a Utilitarian may have reason to think that his new rule will, generally speaking, be adopted only by those to whom the change will be beneficial, and repudiated by those who are in a different stage of moral or intellectual development: and in such a case he will have but little hesitation in introducing it. And a similar line of argument may remove his hesitation as to teaching Utilitarianism generally (in so far as he is persuaded that it is a

'dangerous' doctrine) or any other dangerous truth: if there is reason to believe that the bulk of the persons to whom it would do harm will be prompted by a salutary instinct to repudiate it. But whether this is likely to be the case or not in any particular instance, must of course always be matter for grave and anxious consideration.

And thus we have been led inevitably to discuss the question which we reserved in the last section: viz. how Utilitarianism should deal with the fact of divergent moral opinions held simultaneously by different members of the same society. For it has become plain that though two different kinds of conduct cannot both be right under the same circumstances, two contradictory opinions as to the rightness of conduct may possibly both be expedient: it may conduce most to the general happiness that *A* should do a certain act, and at the same time that *B*, *C*, *D* should blame it. The Utilitarian of course cannot really join in the disapproval, but he may think it expedient to leave it unshaken; and at the same time may think it right, if placed in the supposed circumstances, to do the act that is generally disapproved. And so generally it may be best on the whole that there should be conflicting codes of morality in a given society at a certain stage of its development. And indeed the same general reasoning—from the probable origin of the moral sense and its flexible adjustment to the varying conditions of human life—which furnished at least a presumption that Common-Sense morality is roughly coincident with the code which a perfectly enlightened Utilitarian would lay down for human beings as now constituted, might be used in favour of these divergent codes: it may be said that these, too, form part of the complex adjustment of man to his circumstances, and that they are needed to supplement and qualify the morality of Common Sense.

However paradoxical this doctrine may appear, we can find cases where it seems to be implicitly accepted by Common Sense: or at least where it is required to make Common Sense consistent with itself. Let us consider, for example, the common moral judgments concerning rebellions. It is commonly thought, on the one hand, that these abrupt breaches of order are sometimes morally necessary; and, on the other hand, that

they ought always to be vigorously resisted, and in case of failure punished by extreme penalties inflicted at least on the ringleaders; for otherwise they would be attempted under circumstances where there was no sufficient justification for them: but it seems evident that, in the actual condition of men's moral sentiments, this vigorous repression requires the support of a strong body of opinion condemning the rebels as wrong, and not merely as mistaken in their calculations of the chances of success. Similarly it seems expedient that the breaches of Good Faith and Veracity by diplomatists and statesmen—which yet may in extreme cases be the best means of effecting highly beneficial changes in the internal or external relations of states —should yet be condemned by public opinion; lest they should be used in cases not so extreme. And so again it may be best on the whole that some of those special relaxations of certain moral rules, that were before noticed in certain professions and sections of society, should continue to exist, while at the same time they should continue to be disapproved by the rest of the society. The evils, however, which must spring from this permanent conflict of opinion are so grave, that it seems improbable that an enlightened Utilitarian will not in most cases attempt to remove it; by either openly maintaining the need of a relaxation of the ordinary moral rule under the special circumstances in question; or, on the other hand, endeavouring to get the ordinary rule recognised and enforced by all conscientious persons in that section of society where its breach has become habitual. And of these two courses it seems that he will in most cases adopt the latter: since the rule is most commonly found on examination to have been relaxed rather for the convenience of individuals, than in the interest of the community at large.

§ 4. Finally, let us consider the general relation of Utilitarianism to that part of common morality which extends beyond the range of strict duty: that is, to the Ideal of character and conduct which in any community at any given time is commonly admired and praised as the sum of Excellences or Perfections. To begin, it must be allowed that this distinction between Excellence and Strict Duty does not seem properly admissible in Utilitarianism, any more than it is in Stoicism

or any of the more exacting forms of Intuitional morality; for a Utilitarian must hold that it is always wrong and irrational for a man to do anything else than what he believes most conducive to Universal Happiness; and it is not possible for him to do more. Still, reflection shews that the antithesis must be admitted on two grounds. In the first place, some excellences are only partially and indirectly within the control of the will, and we require to distinguish the realization of these in conduct from the performance of Duty proper, which is always something that *can* be done at any moment. Secondly, even in the case of strictly voluntary conduct, the distinction between a part that is praiseworthy and admirable and a part that is merely right is—if I may so say—*secondarily* reasonable on Utilitarian principles, though it is not so *primarily:* because, as it is natural to us to compare any individual's character or conduct, not with our highest ideal—Utilitarian or otherwise—but with a certain average standard; so it seems ultimately conducive to the general happiness that such natural sentiments of admiration should be allowed free play. For the recognition of excellence in ourselves, and still more in others, is directly an important source of happiness, as it is commonly attended with a peculiar pleasurable emotion of a highly refined kind: and again, the attractive force of the excellence thus exhibited, the desire of imitation which it arouses in others, is a powerful stimulus to right action, which we cannot afford to spare. Further, these emotions naturally tend to inspire disinterested personal affections of a pure and elevated kind[1], which are again directly an important source of happiness and a valuable aid to the fulfilment of duty. Moreover, our nature seems to require the double stimulus of praise and blame from others, in order to the best performance of duty that we can at present attain: so that the "social sanction" would be less effective if it became purely penal. On these grounds a Utilitarian will naturally and reasonably praise any conduct more felicific in its tendency than what an average man would do under the given circumstances. He will of course be conscious that, on his view, the limit down to which praiseworthiness extends must

[1] This is the empirical justification for the doctrine of Aristotle and others that Excellence of Character is the "proper object" of Love.

be relative to the particular state of moral progress reached by mankind generally in his age and country; and he will make continual efforts to elevate this standard. But any attempt to effect a sudden change in it is likely to fail: as history shews us very few cases in which the average morality of any society appears to have been permanently raised *per saltum*. Similarly, the utilitarian will praise the Dispositions or permanent qualities of character to which such conduct is referred as its causes, and the Motives that prompt to it: and, as we have seen[1], he may without inconsistency admire the Disposition or Motive if it is of a kind of which the general effects are more than ordinarily felicific, even while he disapproves of the conduct to which it has led in any particular case.

Passing now to compare the contents of the Utilitarian Ideal of character with the virtues and other excellences recognised by Common Sense, we may observe, first, that general coincidence between the two on which Hume and others have insisted. No quality has ever been praised as excellent by mankind generally which cannot be shewn to have some marked felicific effect, and to be within proper limits obviously conducive to the general happiness. Still, it does not follow that such qualities are always fostered and encouraged by society in the proportion in which a Utilitarian would desire them to be: in fact, it is a common observation to make, in contemplating the morality of other societies, that some useful qualities are unduly neglected, while others are over-prized and even admired when they exist in such excess as to become, on the whole, infelicific. The consistent Utilitarian may therefore find it necessary to rectify the prevalent moral ideal in important particulars. And here it scarcely seems that he will find any such Utilitarian restrictions on innovation, as appeared to exist in the case of commonly received rules of duty. For the Common-Sense notions of the different excellences of conduct (considered as extending beyond the range of strict duty) are generally so vague as to offer at least no definite resistance to a Utilitarian interpretation of their scope: by teaching and acting upon such an interpretation a man is in no danger of being brought into infelicific discord with Common Sense: especially since the ideal of moral

[1] Cf. *ante*, c. III. § 2.

excellence seems to vary within the limits of the same community to a much greater extent than the code of strict duty. For example, a man who in an age when excessive asceticism is praised, sets an example of enjoying harmless bodily pleasures, or who in circles where useless daring is admired, prefers to exhibit and commend caution and discretion, at the worst misses some praise that he might otherwise have earned, and is thought a little dull and unaspiring: he does not come into any patent conflict with common opinion. Or, if we may say more generally that an enlightened Utilitarian is likely to lay less stress on the cultivation of those negative virtues, tendencies to restrict and refrain, which are prominent in the Common-Sense ideal of character; and to set more value in comparison on those qualities of mind which are the direct source of positive pleasure to the agent or to others—some of which Common Sense scarcely recognises as excellences,—he still will not carry this innovation to such a pitch as to incur general condemnation. For no enlightened Utilitarian can ignore the fundamental importance of these restrictive and regulative dispositions, or think that they are sufficiently developed in ordinary men at the present time, so that they may properly be excluded from moral admiration: though he may hold that they have been too prominent, to the neglect of other valuable qualities, in the common conception of moral Perfection. Nay, we may even venture to say that, under most circumstances, a man who earnestly and successfully endeavours to realize the Utilitarian Ideal, however he may deviate from the commonly-received type of a perfect character, is likely to win sufficient recognition and praise from Common Sense. For, whether it be true or not that the whole of morality has sprung from the root of sympathy, it is certain that self-love and sympathy combined are sufficiently strong in average men to dispose them to grateful admiration of any exceptional efforts to promote the common good, even though these efforts may take a somewhat novel form. To any exhibition of more extended sympathy or more fervent public spirit than is ordinarily shewn, and any attempt to develope these qualities in others, Common Sense is rarely unresponsive: provided, of course, that these impulses are accompanied with adequate knowledge of actual circumstances

and insight into the relation of means to ends, and that they do not run counter to any recognised rules of duty[1]. And it seems to be principally in this direction that the recent spread of Utilitarianism has positively modified the ideal of our society, and is likely to modify it further in the future. Hence the stress which Utilitarians are apt to lay on social and political activity of all kinds, and the tendency which Utilitarian ethics have always shewn to pass over into politics. For one who values conduct in proportion to its felicific consequences, will naturally set a higher estimate on effective beneficence in public affairs than on the purest manifestation of virtue in the details of private life: while on the other hand an Intuitionist (though no doubt vaguely recognising that a man ought to do all the good he can in public affairs) still commonly holds that Virtue may be as fully and as admirably exhibited on a small as on a large scale. A sincere Utilitarian, therefore, is likely to be an eager politician: but on what principles his political action ought to be determined, it scarcely lies within the scope of this treatise to investigate.

[1] We have seen that a Utilitarian may sometimes have to override these rules; but then the case falls under the head discussed in the previous section.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SANCTIONS OF UTILITARIANISM.

§ 1. We have now, perhaps, obtained a sufficiently clear outline of the manner in which a consistent Utilitarian will behave. But many persons will still feel that, after all, it has not really been shewn why a man should be a consistent Utilitarian. It may be granted that we seem to have proved in chap. 2, that it is reasonable to take the Greatest Happiness of the Greatest Number as the ultimate end of action. But in order that this proof may have any practical effect, a man must have a certain impulse to do what is reasonable as such: and many persons will say—and probably with truth—that if such a wish exists in them at all it is feeble in comparison with other impulses: and that they require some much stronger inducement to do what is right than this highly abstract and refined desire. And in fact Utilitarians have not usually supposed or appealed to any such desire, at the same time that they have been anxious to persuade men to conform to Utilitarian rules of conduct: accordingly they have sought to attain this result by dwelling on what they call the Sanctions of these rules; that is, the pleasures to be gained or pains to be avoided by the individual conforming to them.

Again, there are others who will say that though it is undoubtedly reasonable to prefer the general happiness to one's own, when the two are presented as alternatives; still it remains also clearly reasonable to take one's own greatest happiness as one's ultimate and paramount end. They will

maintain that the proof offered in ch. 2, does not really convert them from Egoistic to Universalistic Hedonism; but only convinces them that, unless the two can be shewn to coincide, Practical Reason is divided against itself. They will urge further that, if we are to choose between the two, Egoistic Hedonism has clearly a prior claim on our assent: and that the individual will be right in aiming ultimately at what is ultimately desirable for himself, leaving the realization of Universal Good to the care of the universe. And this position, however it may offend our sentiments, is certainly very difficult to assail with argument. So that it becomes of fundamental importance to ascertain how far these two aims admit of being reconciled: and in this way again we are led to examine the Egoistic inducements to conform to Utilitarian rules, in order to see whether an Egoist who remains obstinately impervious to what we have called Proof may be persuaded into practical Utilitarianism by a consideration of Sanctions.

§ 2. Now, in so far as Utilitarian morality coincides with that of Common Sense—as we have seen that it does in the main—this investigation has been already performed in ch. 5 of B. II. It there appeared that while in any tolerable state of society the performance of duties towards others and the exercise of social virtue seem *generally* likely to coincide with the attainment of the greatest possible happiness in the long run for the virtuous agent, still the *universality* and *completeness* of this coincidence are at least incapable of empirical proof: and that, indeed, the more carefully we analyse and estimate the different sanctions—Legal, Social and Conscientious—considered as operating under the actual conditions of human life, the more nearly certain it seems that they cannot be always adequate to produce this coincidence. The natural effect of this argument upon a convinced Utilitarian is merely to make him anxious to alter the actual conditions of human life: and it would certainly be a most valuable contribution to the actual happiness of mankind, if we could so improve the adjustment of the machine of Law in any society, and so stimulate and direct the common awards of praise and blame, as to render it clearly prudent for every individual to

promote as much as possible the general good. However, we are not now considering what a consistent Utilitarian will try to effect for the future, but what a consistent Egoist is to do in the present. And, as things are, whatever difference exists between Utilitarian morality and that of Common Sense is of such a kind as to render the coincidence with Egoism still more improbable in the case of the former. For we have seen that Utilitarianism is more rigid than Common Sense in exacting the sacrifice of the agent's private interests where they are incompatible with the Greatest Happiness of the Greatest Number: and of course in so far as the Utilitarian's principles bring him into conflict with any of the commonly accepted rules of morality, the whole force of the Social Sanction operates to deter him from what he conceives to be his duty.

§ 3. There are however writers of the Utilitarian school, who seem to maintain or imply, that by due contemplation of the paramount importance of Sympathy as an element of human happiness we shall be led to see the coincidence of the good of each with the good of all. I may refer especially to Mill's treatise on Utilitarianism (ch. 3, *passim*): where however the argument is not easy to follow, from a confusion between three different objects of inquiry: (1) the actual effect of sympathy in inducing conformity to the rules of Utilitarian ethics, (2) the effect in this direction which it is likely to have in the future, (3) the value of sympathetic pleasures and pains as estimated by an enlightened Egoist. The first and third of these questions it was not possible for Mill to separate, owing to his psychological doctrine that men universally aim at what they conceive to be their own greatest happiness. But if my refutation of this doctrine[1] is valid, we have carefully to distinguish two ways in which sympathy operates: it no doubt generates sympathetic pleasures and pains, which must of course be taken into account in the calculations of Egoistic Hedonism: but it also causes impulses to "altruistic" action, of which the force is quite out of proportion to the sympathetic pleasure (or relief from pain) which such action seems likely to secure to the agent. So that even if the average man ever should reach such a pitch of sym-

[1] Cf. c. 4, § 3.

pathetic development, as never to feel prompted to sacrifice the general good to his own, still this will not prove that it is egoistically reasonable for him to behave in this way. Though certainly if we could only secure the actual result it would be comparatively unimportant for a Utilitarian to convince an egoist of its reasonableness. And perhaps the hope of realizing this Utilitarian millennium in the future is one in which even a chastened imagination may legitimately indulge. But no one is likely to maintain that sympathy is now so far developed in most men as actually to produce this result: and if we pass from considering what men actually do, to ask what enlightened self-interest would prompt, it does not seem that Mill's argument affords even a probability that conduct so altruistic would be egoistically reasonable.

In saying this, I am as far as possible from any wish to depreciate the value of sympathy as a source of happiness even to human beings as at present constituted. Indeed I am of opinion that its pleasures and pains really constitute a great part of that internal reward of social virtue, and punishment of social misconduct, which in B. II. c. 5 I roughly set down as due to the moral sentiments. For in truth, I find it very difficult to distinguish the sympathetic and the properly moral feelings in introspective analysis of my own consciousness: it seems clear that these two elements are continually combined, but it is hard to say precisely in what proportion: and what others communicate of their experience inclines me to think that the proportion is very different in different individuals. Perhaps we may trace a general law of variation in the relative proportion of these two elements as exhibited in the development of the moral consciousness in the race and also in individuals: for it seems that at a certain stage of this development the mind is more susceptible to emotions connected with abstract moral ideas and rules presented as absolute: while after emerging from this stage and before entering it the feelings that belong to personal relations are stronger. Certainly in a Utilitarian's mind sympathy tends to become a prominent element of all instinctive moral feelings that refer to social conduct: as in his view the rational basis of the moral impulse must ultimately lie in some pleasure won or pain saved for others; so that

he never has to sacrifice himself to an impersonal Law, but always for some being or beings with whom he has at least some degree of fellow-feeling.

But besides admitting the actual importance of sympathetic pleasures to the majority of mankind, I should go further and maintain that, on empirical grounds alone, enlightened self-interest would direct most men to foster and develop their sympathetic susceptibilities to a greater extent than is now commonly attained. The effectiveness of Butler's famous argument against the vulgar antithesis between Self-love and Benevolence is undeniable: and it seems scarcely extravagant to say that, amid all the profuse waste of the means of happiness which men commit, there is no imprudence more flagrant than that of Selfishness in the ordinary sense of the term,—that excessive concentration of attention on the individual's own happiness which renders it impossible for him to feel any strong interest in the pleasures and pains of others. The perpetual prominence of self that hence results tends to deprive all enjoyments of their keenness and zest, and produce rapid satiety and *ennui*: the selfish man misses the sense of elevation and enlargement given by wide interests; he misses the secure and serene satisfaction that attends continually on activities directed towards ends more stable and permanent than one's own happiness can be: he misses the peculiar rich sweetness, depending upon a sort of complex reverberation of sympathy, which is always found in services rendered to those whom we love and who are grateful. He is made to feel in a thousand various ways, according to the degree of refinement which his nature has attained, the discord between the rhythms of his own life and of that larger life of which his own is but an insignificant fraction.

But allowing[1] all this, it yet seems to me to admit of no more doubt than the general uncertainty of hedonistic com-

[1] I do not however think that we are justified in stating as *universally* true what has been admitted in the preceding paragraph. Some few thoroughly selfish persons appear at least to be happier than most of the unselfish; and there are other exceptional natures whose chief happiness seems to be derived from activity, disinterested indeed, but directed towards other ends than human happiness.

parison necessarily involves, that the utmost development of sympathy, intensive and extensive, which is now possible to any but a very few exceptional persons, would not cause a perfect coincidence between Utilitarian duty and self-interest. Here it seems to me that what was said in B. II. c. 5, § 4, to shew the insufficiency of the Conscientious Sanction, applies equally, *mutatis mutandis*, to Sympathy. Suppose a man finds that a regard for the general good—Utilitarian Duty—demands from him a sacrifice, or extreme risk, of life. There are perhaps one or two human beings so dear to him that the remainder of a life saved by sacrificing their happiness to his own would be worthless to him from an egoistic point of view. But it is doubtful whether many men, "sitting down in a cool moment" to make the estimate, would affirm even this: and of course that particular portion of the general happiness, for which one is called upon to sacrifice one's own, may easily be the happiness of persons not especially dear to one. But again, from this normal limitation of our keenest and strongest sympathy to a very small circle of human beings, it results that the very development of sympathy may operate to increase the weight thrown into the scale against Utilitarian duty. There are very few persons, however strongly and widely sympathetic, who are so constituted as to feel for the pleasures and pains of mankind generally a degree of sympathy at all commensurate with their concern for wife or children, or lover, or bosom friend: and if any training of the affections is at present possible which would materially alter this proportion in the general distribution of our sympathy, it scarcely seems that such a training is to be recommended as on the whole felicific[1]. And thus when Utilitarian Duty calls on us to sacrifice not only our own pleasures but the happiness of those we love to the general good, the very Sanction on which Utiliarianism most relies must act powerfully in opposition to its precepts.

But even apart from these exceptional cases—which are yet sufficient to decide the abstract question—it seems that the course of conduct by which a man would most fully reap the

[1] To effect this we should probably require some such drastic treatment of human relations as that for which even the eloquence of Plato has failed to win approval. Cf. *Republic*, B. v.

rewards of Sympathy (as far as they are empirically ascertainable) will often be very different from that to which a sincere desire to promote the general happiness would direct him. For the relief of distress and calamity is an important part of Utilitarian duty: but as the state of the person relieved is on the whole painful, it would appear that sympathy under these circumstances must be a source of pain rather than pleasure, in proportion to its intensity. It is probably true, as a general rule, that in the relief of distress other elements of the complex Pleasure of Benevolence decidedly outweigh this sympathetic pain:—for the effusion of pity is itself pleasurable, and we commonly feel more keenly that amelioration of the sufferer's state which is due to our exertions than we do his pain otherwise caused, and there is further the pleasure that we derive from his gratitude, and the pleasure that is the normal reflex of activity directed under a strong impulse towards a permanently valued end. Still, when the distress is bitter and continued, and such as we can only partially mitigate by all our efforts, the philanthropist's sympathetic discomfort must necessarily be considerable: and the work of combating misery, though not devoid of elevated happiness, will be much less happy on the whole than many other forms of activity: while yet it may be to just this work that Duty seems to summon us. Or again, a man may find that he can best promote the general happiness by working in comparative solitude for ends that he never hopes to see realized, or by working chiefly among and for persons for whom he cannot feel much affection, or by doing what must alienate or grieve those whom he loves best, or must make it necessary for him to dispense with the most intimate of human ties. In short, there seem to be numberless ways in which the dictates of that Rational Benevolence, which as a Utilitarian he is bound absolutely to obey, may conflict with that indulgence of kind affections which Shaftesbury and his followers so persuasively exhibit as its own reward.

§ 4. It seems then that we must conclude, from the arguments given in B. II. c. 5, supplemented by the discussion in the preceding section, that the inseparable connexion between Utilitarian Duty and the greatest happiness of the in-

dividual who conforms to it, cannot be satisfactorily demonstrated on empirical grounds. Hence another section of the Utilitarian school has preferred to throw the weight of Duty on the Religious Sanction: and this procedure has been partly adopted by some of those who have chiefly dwelt on Sympathy as a motive. From this point of view the Utilitarian Code is conceived as the Law of God, who is to be understood as having commanded men to promote the general happiness, and as having announced an intention of rewarding those who obey his commands and punishing the disobedient. It is clear that if we feel convinced that an Omnipotent Being has, in whatever way, signified such commands and announcements, a rational egoist can want no further inducement to frame his life on Utilitarian principles. It only remains to consider how this conviction is attained. This is commonly thought to be either by supernatural Revelation, or by the natural exercise of Reason, or in both ways. As regards the former it is to be observed that—with a few exceptions—the moralists who hold that God has disclosed his law either to special individuals in past ages who have left a written record of what was revealed to them, or to a permanent succession of persons appointed in a particular manner, or to religious persons generally in some supernatural way, do not consider that it is the Utilitarian Code that has thus been revealed, but rather the rules of Common-sense morality with some special modifications and additions. Still, as Mill has urged, in so far as Utilitarianism is more rigorous than Common Sense in exacting the sacrifice of the individual's happiness to that of mankind generally, it is strictly in accordance with the most characteristic teaching of Christianity. It seems, however, unnecessary to discuss the precise relation of different Revelational Codes to Utilitarianism, as it would be going beyond our province to investigate the grounds on which a Divine origin has been attributed to them.

In so far, however, as a knowledge of God's law is believed to be attainable by the Reason, Ethics and Theology seem to be so closely connected that we cannot sharply separate their provinces. For, as we saw[1], it has been widely maintained, that

[1] B. III. c. 1, § 4.

the relation of moral rules to a Divine Lawgiver is implicitly cognised in the act of thought by which we discern these rules to be binding. And no doubt the terms (such as 'moral obligation'), which we commonly use in speaking of these rules, are naturally suggestive of Legal Sanctions and so of a Sovereign by whom these are announced and enforced. Indeed many thinkers since Locke have refused to admit any other meaning in the terms Right, Duty, &c., except that of a rule imposed by a lawgiver. This view however seems opposed to Common Sense, as may be shewn in various ways[1]; but perhaps most easily by pointing out that the Divine Lawgiver is himself conceived as a Moral Agent; i. e. as prescribing what is intrinsically right, and designing what is intrinsically good. It is clear that in this conception at least the notions 'right' and 'good' are used absolutely: and that they are here used in a sense not essentially different from that which they ordinarily bear seems to be affirmed by the *consensus* of religious persons. Still, though Common Sense does not regard moral rules as being *merely* the mandates of an Omnipotent Being who will reward and punish men according as they obey or violate them: it certainly holds that this is a true though partial view of them, and perhaps that it may be intuitively apprehended. If then reflection leads us to conclude that the particular moral principles of Common Sense are to be systematized as subordinate to that pre-eminently certain and irrefragable intuition which stands as the first principle of Utilitarianism; then, of course, it will be the Utilitarian Code to which we shall believe the Divine Sanctions to be attached.

And this result may be reached in another way. For we must conceive God's end to be Universal Good: and if we have been right in interpreting this as Universal Happiness, it must be that which he designs and aims at: and the recognition of this Divine design by us, whether confusedly and implicitly as in the moral intuitions of ordinary men, or clearly and explicitly as the result of ethical reflection, carries with it a command to regard the same end as paramount. Thus if in any case after calculating the consequences of two alternatives

[1] *Cf.* B. III. c. 1, § 4.

of conduct we choose that which seems likely to be less conducive to Happiness generally, we shall be deliberately acting in opposition to what we believe to be the Divine design, and so in a manner for which we cannot but expect punishment.

To this it has been objected, that observation of the actual world shews us that the happiness of sentient beings is so imperfectly attained in it, and with so large an intermixture of pain and misery, that we cannot really conceive Universal Happiness to be God's end, unless we admit that he is not Omnipotent. And no doubt the assertion that God is omnipotent will require to be understood with some limitation; but perhaps with no greater limitation than has always been implicitly admitted by thoughtful theologians. For these seem always to have allowed that some things are impossible to God: as, for example, to change the past. And perhaps if our knowledge of the Universe were complete, we might discern the *quantum* of happiness ultimately attained in it to be as great as could be attained without the accomplishment of what we should then see to be just as inconceivable and absurd as changing the past. This, however, is a view which it belongs rather to the Theologian to develop. At any rate we may urge that there does not seem to be any other interpretation of Good—and we must conceive God's end to be Good—according to which it appears more completely realized in the actual Universe. For the wonderful perfections of work that we admire in the physical world are yet everywhere mingled with imperfection, and subject to destruction and decay: and similarly in the world of human conduct Virtue is at least as much balanced by Vice as Happiness is by Misery. So that, if the ethical reasoning that led us to interpret Ultimate Good as Happiness is sound, there seems no argument from Natural Theology to set against it.

§ 5. If, then, we may assume the existence of such a Being, as God, by the *consensus* of Theologians, is conceived to be, it seems that we may infer the existence of Divine—and of course adequate—sanctions to the code of social duty as constructed on a Utilitarian basis. It seems, however, desirable, before we conclude, to examine carefully the validity of this assumption, in so far as it seems to be supported on ethical

grounds alone. For by the result of such an examination will be determined, as we now see, the very important question whether ethical science can be constructed on an independent basis; or whether it is forced to borrow a fundamental and indispensable premiss from Theology. In order fairly to perform this examination, let us reflect upon the clearest and most certain of our moral intuitions, such as Clarke's 'Rule of Equity,' or the First Principle of Utilitarianism. I find that I undoubtedly seem to perceive, as clearly and certainly as I see any axiom in Arithmetic or Geometry, that it is "right" and "reasonable," and the "dictate of reason" and "my duty" to treat every man as I should think that I myself ought to be treated in precisely similar circumstances, and to do what I believe to be ultimately conducive to universal Good or Happiness. But I cannot find inseparably connected with this conviction, and similarly attainable by mere reflective intuition, any cognition that there actually is a Supreme Being who will adequately reward me for obeying this rule of duty, or punish me for violating it. Or, more generally[1], I do not find in my moral consciousness any intuition, claiming to be clear and certain, that the performance of duty will be adequately rewarded and its violation punished. I no doubt feel a strong sentiment, apparently inseparable from the strictly moral sentiments, prompting me to hope and long that it may be so: nay more, my moral reason declares that it ought to be so—where, of course, 'ought' is not used in a strictly ethical sense, but expresses the need that Practical Reason feels of obtaining this premiss, if it is to be made consistent with itself. For, if we find an ultimate and fundamental contradiction in

[1] It is not necessary, if we are simply considering Ethics as a possible independent science, to throw the fundamental premiss of which we are now examining the validity into a Theistic form. Nor does it seem always to have taken that form in the support which Positive Religion has given to Morality. In the Buddhist creed this notion of the rewards inseparably attaching to right conduct seems to have been developed in a far more elaborate and systematic manner than it has in any phase of Christianity. But, as conceived by enlightened Buddhists, these rewards are not distributed by the volition of a Supreme Person, but by the natural operation of an impersonal Law. I may observe that Mr Matthew Arnold, in his striking Essay on *Literature and Dogma*, appears to have been led by a study of the Hebrew Scriptures to a conclusion substantially the same as that of enlightened Buddhism.

our apparent intuitions of what is Reasonable in conduct, we seem forced to the conclusion that they were not really intuitions after all, and that the apparently intuitive operation of the Practical Reason is essentially illusory. Therefore it is, one may say, a matter of life and death to the Practical Reason that this premiss should be somehow obtained. At the same time, the mere fact that I cannot act rationally without assuming a certain proposition, does not appear to me,—as it does to some minds,—a sufficient ground for believing it to be true. Nor can I fall back on the Kantian resource[1] of thinking myself under a moral necessity to regard all my duties *as if they were* commandments of God, although not entitled to hold speculatively that any such Supreme Being exists "as Real." I am so far from feeling bound to believe for purposes of practice what I see no ground for holding as a speculative truth, that I cannot even conceive the state of mind which these words seem to describe, except as a momentary half-wilful irrationality, committed in a violent access of philosophic despair. Still it seems plain that in proportion as man has lived in the exercise of the Practical Reason—as he believed—and feels as an actual force the desire to do what is right and reasonable as such, his demand for this premiss will be intense and imperious. Thus we are not surprised to find Socrates—the type for all ages of the man in whom this desire is predominant—declaring with simple conviction that 'if the Rulers of the Universe do not prefer the just man to the unjust, it is better to die than to live.' And we must observe that in the feeling that prompts to such declaration the desire to rationalize one's own conduct is not the sole, nor perhaps always the most prominent, element. For however difficult it may practically be to do one's duty when it comes into conflict with one's happiness, it often does not seem very difficult, when we are considering the question in the abstract, to decide in favour of duty. When a man passionately refuses to believe that the "Wages of Virtue" can "be dust," it is often less from any private reckoning about his own wages than from a disinterested aversion to a universe so fundamentally irrational

[1] Cf. *Tugendlehre*, Bk. I. c. III. § 13. The resource, however, is not exactly used by Kant for our present object, as he does not mean to recognise the principle of Egoism as rational.

that "Good for the Individual" is *not* ultimately identified with "Universal Good."

Still to all this it is fairly and conclusively replied that the existence of these, however elevated, desires, does not furnish a proof of the existence of their object: indeed, it can scarcely afford a strong presumption in favour of this conclusion, considering the large proportion of human desires that experience shews to be destined to disappointment. But it must be urged again that we do not fully conceive the argument in favour of the assumption that we are now considering, if we merely represent this as satisfying certain Desires. We have rather to regard it as an hypothesis logically necessary to avoid a fundamental contradiction in a vast system of Beliefs: a contradiction so fundamental that if it cannot be overcome the whole system must fall to the ground and scepticism be triumphant over one chief department of our thought. The exact weight to be attached to this consideration, I cannot here pretend adequately to estimate. To do so would require a complete discussion of the Theory of Method, and of the ultimate basis of philosophic certainty. I must here content myself with exhibiting the general force of the argument—or, rather, I can hardly hope to do this, if it has not been already sufficiently impressed upon the mind of any reader of the present treatise. For when, after the prolonged maintenance of the analytical attitude, we at length allow ourselves to ask for a synthesis of ethical methods, we cannot but see that such a synthesis has been to a great extent suggested in the course of the analysis. We have found that the original antithesis between Intuitionism and Utilitarianism must be entirely discarded: since the First Principle of Utilitarianism has appeared as the most certain and comprehensive of Intuitions, and most of the others naturally range themselves in subordination to it, and even seem to be most thoroughly understood when considered as partial applications of it unconsciously and imperfectly made. Nor has it appeared very difficult to marshal our common judgments both of Goodness and of Rightness into a system under this principle without impairing our confidence in the substantial veracity of Common Sense: and all particular moral sentiments and special sympathies fall

easily into their places as auxiliaries to the two supreme coincident impulses, Universal Benevolence and the desire to do what is Right as such. In such a reconciliation, though much practical embarrassment may be caused in details by the conflict that will partially continue between what we may now call Instinctive and Calculative Morality, all theoretical perplexity as to the general principles of determining Social Duty will have been entirely—or almost entirely—removed. But the fundamental opposition between the principle of Rational Egoism and that on which such a system of duty is constructed, only comes out more sharp and clear after the reconciliation between the other methods. The old immoral paradox, "that my performance of Social Duty is good not for me but for others," cannot be completely refuted by empirical arguments: nay, the more we study these arguments the more we are forced to admit, that if we have these alone to rely on, there must be some cases in which the paradox is true. And yet we cannot but admit with Butler, that it is ultimately reasonable to seek one's own happiness. Hence the whole system of our beliefs as to the intrinsic reasonableness of conduct must fall, without a hypothesis unverifiable by experience reconciling the Individual with the Universal Reason, without a belief, in some form or other, that the moral order which we see imperfectly realized in this actual world is yet actually perfect. If we reject this belief, we may perhaps still find in the non-moral universe an adequate object for the Speculative Reason, capable of being in some sense ultimately understood. But the Cosmos of Duty is thus really reduced to a Chaos: and the prolonged effort of the human intellect to frame a perfect ideal of rational conduct is seen to have been foredoomed to inevitable failure.

THE END.

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A SUPPLEMENT

TO THE FIRST EDITION

OF THE

METHODS OF ETHICS

BY

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CONTAINING ALL THE IMPORTANT ADDITIONS AND ALTERATIONS IN THE SECOND EDITION.

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PREFACE.

In preparing the second edition of *The Methods of Ethics*, I found it desirable to make extensive alterations and additions; I have therefore thought it well to publish them here in a separate form, for the use of purchasers of my first edition. On one or two points I have to acknowledge a certain change of view; which is partly at least due to criticism. For instance, in ch. 4 of Bk. I. (on "Pleasure and Desire"), which has been a good deal criticised by Prof. Bain and others, although I still retain my former opinion on the psychological question at issue, I have been led to take a different view of the relation of this question to Ethics; and in fact § 1 of this chapter as it at present stands directly contradicts the corresponding passage in the former edition. So again, as regards the following chapter, on 'Free-Will,' though I have not exactly found that the comments which it has called forth have removed my difficulties in dealing with this time-honoured problem, I have become convinced that I ought not to have crudely obtruded these difficulties on the reader, while professedly excluding the consideration of them from my subject. In the present edition therefore I have carefully limited myself to

explaining and justifying the view that I take of the practical aspect of the question. I have further been led, through study of the Theory of Evolution in its application to practice, to attach somewhat more importance to this theory than I had previously done; and also in several passages of Bks. III. and IV. to substitute 'well-being' for 'happiness,' in my exposition of that implicit reference to some further end and standard which reflection on the Morality of Common Sense continually brings into view. This latter change however (as I explain in the concluding chapter of Book III.) is not ultimately found to have any practical effect. I have also modified my view of 'objective rightness,' as the reader will see by comparing Bk. I. c. 1, § 3 with the corresponding passage in the former edition; but here again the alteration has no material importance. In my exposition of the Utilitarian principle (Bk. IV. c. 1) I have shortened the cumbrous phrase 'greatest happiness of the greatest number' by omitting—as its author ultimately advised—the last four words. And finally, I have yielded as far as I could to the objections that have been strongly urged against the concluding chapter of the treatise. The main discussion therein contained still seems to me indispensable to the completeness of the work; but I have endeavoured to give the chapter a new aspect by altering its commencement, and omitting most of the concluding paragraph.

The greater part, however, of the new matter in this edition is merely explanatory and supplementary. I have endeavoured to give a fuller and clearer account of my views on any points on which I either have myself seen them to be ambiguously or inadequately

expressed, or have found by experience that they were liable to be misunderstood. Thus in Bk. I. c. 2, I have tried to furnish a rather more instructive account than my first edition contained of the mutual relations of Ethics and Politics. Again, even before the appearance of Mr Leslie Stephen's interesting review in *Fraser* (March, 1875), I had seen the desirability of explaining further my general view of the 'Practical Reason,' and of the fundamental notion signified by the terms 'right,' 'ought,' &c. With this object I have entirely rewritten c. 3 of Book I., and made considerable changes in c. 1. Elsewhere, as in cc. 6 and 9 of Book I., and c. 6 of Book II., I have altered chiefly in order to make my expositions more clear and symmetrical. This is partly the case with the considerable changes that I have made in the first three chapters of Book III.; but I have also tried to obviate the objections brought by Professor Calderwood[1] against the first of these chapters. The main part of this Book (cc. 4—12) has been but slightly altered; but in c. 13 (on 'Philosophical Intuitionism'), which has been suggestively criticized by more than one writer, I have thought it expedient to give a more direct statement of my own opinions; instead of confining myself (as I did in the first edition) to comments on those of other moralists. C. 14 again has been considerably modified; chiefly in order to introduce into it the substance of certain portions of an article on 'Hedonism and Ultimate Good,' which I published in *Mind* (No. V.). In Book IV. the changes (besides those above mentioned) have been inconsiderable; and have been chiefly made in order to remove a misconception which I shall presently notice, as to

[1] Cf. *Mind*, No. II.

my general attitude towards the three Methods which I am principally occupied in examining.

In revising my work, I have endeavoured to profit as much as possible by all the criticisms on it that have been brought to my notice, whether public or private[1]. I have frequently deferred to objections, even when they appeared to me unsound, if I thought I could avoid controversy by alterations to which I was myself indifferent. Where I have been unable to make the changes required, I have usually replied, in the text or the notes, to such criticisms as have appeared to me plausible, or in any way instructive. In so doing, I have sometimes referred by name to opponents, where I thought that, from their recognized position as teachers of the subject, this would give a distinct addition of interest to the discussion; but I have been careful to omit such reference where experience has shewn that it would be likely to cause offence. The book is already more controversial than I could wish; and I have therefore avoided encumbering it with any polemics of purely personal interest. For this reason I have generally left unnoticed such criticisms as have been due to mere misapprehensions, against which I thought I could effectually guard in the present edition. There is, however, one fundamental misunderstanding, on which it seems desirable to say a few words. I find that more than one critic has overlooked or disregarded the account of the plan of my treatise, given in the original preface and in § 5 of the introductory chapter: and has consequently supposed me to be writing as an assailant of two of the methods which I

[1] Among unpublished criticisms I ought especially to mention the valuable suggestions that I have received from Mr Carveth Read; to whose assistance in revising the present edition many of my corrections are due.

chiefly examine, and a defender of the third. Thus one of my reviewers seems to regard Book III. (on Intuitionism) as containing mere hostile criticism from the outside: another has constructed an article on the supposition that my principal object is the 'suppression of Egoism': a third has gone to the length of a pamphlet under the impression (apparently) that the 'main argument' of my treatise is a demonstration of Universalistic Hedonism. I am concerned to have caused so much misdirection of criticism: and I have carefully altered in this edition the passages which I perceive to have contributed to it. The Morality that I examine in Book III. is my own morality as much as it is any man's: it is, as I say, the 'Morality of Common Sense,' which I only attempt to represent in so far as I share it; I only place myself outside it either (1) temporarily, for the purpose of impartial criticism, or (2) in so far as I am forced beyond it by a practical consciousness of its incompleteness. I have certainly criticized this morality unsparingly: but I conceive myself to have exposed with equal unreserve the defects and difficulties of the hedonistic method (cf. especially cc. 3, 4 of Bk. II. and c. 5 of Bk. IV.). And as regards the two hedonistic principles, I do not hold the reasonableness of aiming at happiness generally with any stronger conviction than I do that of aiming at one's own. It was no part of my plan to call special attention to this "Dualism of the Practical Reason" as I have elsewhere called it: but I am surprised at the extent to which my view has perplexed even those of my critics who have understood it. I had imagined that they would readily trace it to the source from which I learnt it, Butler's well-known Sermons. I hold with Butler that "Reasonable Self-

love and Conscience are the two chief or superior principles in the nature of man," each of which we are under a "manifest obligation" to obey: and I do not (I believe) differ materially from Butler in my view either of reasonable self-love, or—theology apart—of its relation to conscience. Nor, again, do I differ from him in regarding conscience as essentially a function of the practical Reason: "moral precepts", he says in the *Analogy* (pt. ii. c. 8), "are precepts the reason of which we see." My difference only begins when I ask myself, 'What among the precepts of our common conscience do we really see to be ultimately reasonable?' a question which Butler does not seem to have seriously put, and to which, at any rate, he has given no satisfactory answer. The answer that I found to it supplied the rational basis that I had long perceived to be wanting to the Utilitarianism of Bentham, regarded as an ethical doctrine: and thus enabled me to transcend the commonly received antithesis between Intuitionists and Utilitarians.

I ought to say in conclusion that the matter contained in this Supplement is not entirely new; as in some cases it has been found more convenient to include some portion of the old, in order to make the new more readily intelligible. I have thought it sufficient to indicate the place of the longer passages by noting chapter and section: in the case of minor additions or alterations I have, wherever it seemed necessary, noted at the side the page of the first edition where the context is to be found.

ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS

IN THE SECOND EDITION

OF

THE METHODS OF ETHICS.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

§ 1. THE boundaries of the study called Ethics are variously and often vaguely conceived: but they will be sufficiently defined for the purposes of the present treatise if a 'Method of Ethics' is explained to mean any rational procedure by which we determine Right Conduct or Practice in any particular case. Of the two last terms 'Conduct' is preferable, as the Method of Right Practice would be more naturally understood as including Politics also[1].

Both Ethics and Politics are distinguished from positive sciences by having as their special and primary object to determine what ought to be, and not to ascertain what merely is.....

It is true that the mutual implication of the two kinds of study is, on any theory, very close and complete. Our

[1] I use 'Politics' in its widest signification, to denote the science of Right or Good Legislation and Government.

view of what ought to be is derived, in all details, from our apprehension of what is: and the means of realizing our ideal can only be thoroughly learnt by a careful study of actual phenomena. Still it is clear that at any moment the actions which we ought to do, or the results at which we ought to aim, cannot as such fall within the scope of any of the above-mentioned positive sciences.....

§ 2. In the language of the preceding section I could not avoid taking account of two different forms in which the fundamental problem of Ethics is stated; the difference between which leads, as we shall presently see, to rather important consequences. Ethics is sometimes considered as an investigation of the true Moral laws or rational Rules of Conduct; sometimes as an inquiry into the nature of the ultimate End of human action, anciently known as the Bonum, or Summum Bonum. Either view can be extended so as to comprehend the other: but the former seems most easily applicable to ethical systems generally. For the Good that we investigate in Ethics is limited to Practicable Good, as Aristotle says: we seek knowledge of the end in order to ascertain what actions are the right means to its attainment. Thus however prominent the notion of an Ultimate Good, other than voluntary action of any kind, may be in our Ethical System, and whatever interpretation we may give to this notion, we must still arrive finally, in our ethical conclusions, at the determination of Right or Reasonable rules of conduct.

On the other hand, the second view of Ethics is not naturally applicable to those systems which consider rightness of conduct to consist in conformity to absolute rules.....

It is on account of the prevalence of the view just described, and the prominent place which it consequently occupies in my discussion, that in defining the subject of the present treatise I have avoided the term 'Art of Conduct'; which, to some writers, will appear the more appropriate designation for ethical method as I conceive it.

For the term Art as properly used seems to signify systematic express knowledge (with or without the implicit knowledge or instinct, which we call skill) of the right means to a given end. Now if we assume that the rightness of action

depends on its conduciveness to some ulterior end, then no doubt the determination of the right rules of conduct for human beings in different relations and circumstances would naturally come under the notion of Art. But on the view that the end of moral action is often the Rightness of the action itself and not any ulterior consequences, and that this is known intuitively in each case or class of cases; we can hardly regard this knowledge as coming within the sphere of Art as above explained. Hence, as I do not wish to start with any assumption opposed to this view, I prefer to consider Ethics as the science or study of what ought to be, so far as this depends upon the voluntary action of individuals. Perhaps we should define it at once most precisely and most comprehensively by saying that it imparts or seeks the most perfect knowledge possible of the rightness or goodness of voluntary actions or their results.

§ 3. There is, however, a different view sometimes taken of the scope of Ethics, which requires careful notice. It is commonly supposed to consist, to a great extent, of psychological discussion as to the 'nature of the moral faculty:' and I have myself been obliged to include such a discussion in the present treatise.

Now it does not at first appear why this should belong to ethics, any more than discussions about the mathematical faculty or the faculty of sense-perception belong to mathematics and physics respectively. Our judgments 'that 2 and 2 make 4' and 'that every effect has a cause' are no doubt psychical facts: but we do not in mathematics or physics consider these truths in their relation to the thinking subject: we assume and apply them without psychological reflection. It is therefore interesting to inquire why this is not the case in ethics: why we do not similarly assume and use our ethical axioms without considering the faculty by which we apprehend their truth.

One answer is that the moralist has a practical aim: we desire moral knowledge in order to act on it. Now we cannot help believing what we see to be true, but we can help doing what we see to be right, and in fact often do what we know to be wrong: thus we are forced to notice the existence in us of irrational springs of action, conflicting with knowledge and preventing its practical realization: and the very imperfectness

of the connexion between our moral faculty and our will impels us to seek for more precise knowledge as to the nature of that connexion.

But this is not all. Men never ask 'Why should I believe what I see to be true?' but they frequently ask 'Why should I do what I see to be right?' It is easy to reply that the question is futile: for it could only be answered by a reference to some other recognized principle of right conduct, and the question might just as well be asked as regards that, and so on. But still we do ask the question widely and continually, and therefore this demonstration of its futility is not completely satisfactory; we require besides some explanation of its persistency.

One explanation that may be offered is that, since we are moved to action not by Reason alone but also by desires and inclinations that operate independently of reason, the answer which we really want to the question 'why' is one which does not merely prove a certain action to be right, but also arouses in us a predominant inclination to do it.

That there is an element of truth in this explanation I would not deny. Still I cannot but think that when a man asks 'why he should do' anything, he assumes in himself a determination to pursue whatever conduct may be shewn to be reasonable, even though it be very different from that to which he may happen to feel inclined. And we are generally agreed that reasonable conduct in any case has to be determined on principles, in applying which the agent's inclination is only one element among several that have to be considered, and commonly not the most important element. But though we are generally agreed on this, we are certainly not equally agreed as to what these principles are. The discrepancy which appears glaring when we compare the systems and fundamental formulæ of professed moralists seems to be really present in the common moral reasoning of men generally; with this difference, that whereas the philosopher bases his system on some one principle, and so attains consistency at the risk of paradox, the unphilosophic man is apt to hold different principles at once, in more or less confused combination. If this be so, we can offer another explanation of the persistent unsatisfied

demand for an ultimate reason, above noticed. For if there are several different views of the ultimate reasonableness of conduct, implicit in the thought of ordinary men, though not brought into clear relation to each other: it is easy to see that any answer to the question 'why' will not be completely satisfactory; as it will be given only from one of these points of view, and will always leave room to ask the question from some other.

I am myself convinced that this is the true explanation of the phenomenon: and it is on this conviction that the plan of the present treatise is based. I hold that men, in so far as they reason on morals and attempt to make their practice rational, do so, naturally and normally, upon different principles and by different methods. I admit, of course as a fundamental postulate of Ethics, that either these methods must be reconciled and harmonized, or all but one of them rejected. The common sense of men cannot acquiesce in conflicting principles: so there can be but one rational method of Ethics (in the widest sense of the word method). But in setting out to inquire what this is, we ought to recognize the fact that there are several natural methods.

§ 4. What then are the methods? what are the different practical principles which the common sense of mankind is *primâ facie* prepared to accept as ultimate?.....

If we accept any end as ultimate, *i.e.* as that at which as rational beings we ought to aim, we accept implicitly as our "method of ethics" whatever intellectual process enables us to determine the conduct most conducive to this end. And to every difference in the end accepted will correspond at least some difference in method..... We may perhaps say that *primâ facie* the only two ends which clearly claim to be *rational ends*, or ends absolutely prescribed, are the two just mentioned, Perfection or Excellence of human nature, and Happiness. And we must observe that on the latter of these ends two *primâ facie* distinct methods may be based, according as it is sought to be realized universally, or by each individual for himself alone. For though a man may often best promote his own happiness by labouring and abstaining for the sake of others' happiness, it seems paradoxical to assert that this will in-

variably be the case, and that the sacrifice of one's own happiness to that of others is in the nature of things impossible; at any rate, we cannot assume this at the outset of our discussion.

The case is otherwise with Excellence, at least so far as Moral Excellence is concerned. Circumstances are indeed conceivable in which a man is not unlikely to think that he could best promote the virtue of others by sacrificing his own, and it is probable that noble natures are occasionally tempted to this kind of self-devotion. But no moralist has ever approved of such sacrifice. In all systems in which Virtue is considered as the sole or chief good of man, it is his own virtue which the individual is bidden to take as his primary end: he is only directed to promote the virtue of others in so far as this promotion is compatible with the complete realization of Virtue in himself. Such promotion, in fact, is an exercise of the special Virtue of Benevolence: and moralists of repute have even doubted whether it properly comes within the scope of this Virtue; and whether we ought not to be content with trying to make others happier, leaving it to them to make themselves better. And since Virtue is commonly conceived not only as the most valuable element of human perfection or Excellence, but as having a value even incommensurable with that of other elements: while again the realization of Virtue is thought (by those who reject Utilitarianism) to consist in the complete observance of certain absolute rules of Duty, intuitively known; any method which takes Perfection or Excellence of human nature as ultimate End will coincide to a great extent with that commonly called Intuitive or Intuitional. For the Right Conduct that on the latter view is absolutely prescribed will be that which exhibits and develops the Goodness or Excellence of Character, which on the former view we take as our ultimate end.....

CHAPTER II.

THE RELATION OF ETHICS TO POLITICS.

§ 1. In the last chapter I have spoken of Ethics and Politics as branches of Practical Philosophy, including in the scope of their investigation somewhat that lies outside the sphere of positive sciences: viz. the determination of ends to be sought, or absolute rules to be obeyed. Before proceeding further, it would naturally seem desirable to determine in outline the limits and mutual relations of these different studies; though it is somewhat difficult to do this satisfactorily at the outset of our inquiry: because generally according as we adopt one method of ethics or another we shall adopt different views as to these limits and relations.

If we define Politics as the theory of what ought to be (in human affairs) as far as this depends on the common action of societies of men; we may subdivide it into (1) the Theory of the *work* of government, of which legislation and enforcement of laws is a chief part; and (2) the Theory of the constitution of government, and its relation to the governed (other than the relation of command and obedience, which is involved in the notion of government).

As regards (1). Since a Theory of Legislation is a Theory of what men ought to be compelled by legal penalties to do or forbear, and since no one ought to be legally forced to do what is wrong or bad, it may seem that the legal code will be included within the moral; and that we should determine first the whole code of rules to be observed, and then cut out of this the body of rules that should be legally enforced. On the other hand, it is clear that the right conduct for any member of

society depends to a great extent on what others expect him to do, and what he may reasonably expect them to do; and all such expectations are largely determined by Law. In such cases the definition of moral duty seems to be dependent on and posterior to the determination of legal obligation. But further, from an Egoistic point of view, it may seem that the reasonableness of observing any rules must depend on the consequences to oneself of observing or not observing them; and that legal penalties are likely to be decisive in this consideration; so that egoistic morality will practically depend altogether on Law, and not *vice versâ* (as in Hobbism). Here we see the need of distinguishing Positive Law and Ideal Law, or Law determined on theoretical principles. For all moralists are agreed that there is a general duty of obeying Positive Laws, even when they are not such as we approve: and few, if any, would maintain this duty to be unlimited, and that it is always reasonable to conform to the worst commands of tyrants. The limits, however, of this duty are hard to fix, and would no doubt be fixed differently by different schools. But as regards Law as it ought to be, Egoism does not seem to offer any principles: for though governors have not unfrequently framed laws and ordinances in their own interest, no speculative person has ever pushed

> "the enormous faith of many made for one,"

so far as to construct an ideal social system with a view to the greatest happiness of a single member of it. Writers who have held it reasonable for an individual to take his own happiness as the end of his private conduct, have commonly considered the general happiness as the reasonable end of Law.

If then we examine the relation of Law to Morality from the Utilitarian point of view, it seems evident that the question, what rules of conduct and modes of distributing objects of desire should be legally fixed and enforced, will be determined by the same method of forecasting consequences by which all moral questions are settled on utilitarian principles: we shall endeavour to estimate and balance against each other the good and bad effects of such enforcement. In so far, however, as we divide the Utilitarian theory of private conduct from that of

legislation, and ask which is prior, the answer will be different in respect of different parts of the legal code.

1. To a great extent, obviously, a utilitarian code of law will consist of rules, which any man sincerely desirous of promoting the general happiness would observe, even if they were not legally binding: such as the rule of not inflicting any bodily harm or gratuitous annoyance on any one, except in self-defence or retaliation; and the rule of not interfering with another's enjoyment of wealth acquired by his own labour or the free consent of others or inheritance from parents; and the rule of fulfilling all engagements freely entered into with any one, unless the fulfilment were harmful to others, or more harmful to oneself than beneficial to him, or unless there were good grounds for supposing that the other party would not perform his share of a bilateral contract; and the rule of supporting one's children while helpless, and their mother during pregnancy and nursing, and one's parents if decrepit, and of educating one's children suitably to their future life. As regards such rules as these, Ethics seems independent of Politics, and naturally prior to it; we first consider what conduct is right for private individuals, and then to how much of this they ought to be compelled by legal penalties.

2. There are other rules again which it is clearly for the general happiness to observe, if only their observance is enforced on others; *e.g.* abstinence from personal retaliation of injuries, and a more general and unhesitating fulfilment of contracts than would perhaps be expedient if they were not legally enforced.

3. But again, in the complete determination of the mutual claims of members of society to services and forbearances, there are many points on which the utilitarian theory of right private conduct apart from law would lead to a considerable variety of conclusions, from the great difference in the force of the relevant considerations under different circumstances; while at the same time uniformity is either indispensable, to prevent disputes and disappointments, or at least highly desirable, in order to maintain effectively such rules of conduct as are *generally*—though not *universally*—expedient. Under this head would come the exacter definition of the limits of appropriation, *e.g.* as regards

incorporeal property in literary compositions and technical inventions, and much of the law of inheritance, and of the law regulating the family relations. In all these cases, in so far as they are capable of being theoretically determined, Utilitarian Ethics blends with and is indistinguishable from Utilitarian Politics. We cannot determine the right conduct for a private individual in any particular case, without first ascertaining the rule which it would be generally expedient to maintain in the society of which he is a member. When this is settled there remains for the politician the further problem of deciding which of these rules should be enforced by legal penalties, and which should be left to rest on the weaker and less definite sanctions of moral opinion. It would be out of place to discuss here the principles on which this problem should be determined: but we may observe that their application to any concrete case is necessarily complicated by the consideration of the delicate mutual relations of Positive Law and Positive Morality—as we may call the actual moral opinions generally held in a given society at a given time. For on the one hand it is dangerous in legislation to advance beyond Positive Morality, by prohibiting actions (or inactions) that are generally approved or tolerated; on the other hand, up to the point at which this danger becomes serious, legislation is a most effective instrument for modifying or intensifying public opinion, in the direction in which it is desirable that it should progress. Leaving this difficult question of social dynamics, we may say that normally in a well-organized society the most important and indispensable rules of social behaviour will be legally enforced and the less important left to be maintained by Positive Morality. Law will constitute, as it were, the skeleton of social order, clothed upon by the flesh and blood of Morality.

What has been said above of the blending of Ethics and Politics from a utilitarian point of view applies, of course, to the rules which form the second part of Politics (as I define the term). It is obvious that the moral regulation of the relations of governors to the governed, and of the different parts of government to each other, must be theoretically determined in close connexion with the definite quasi-legal code which is called the Constitution.

I have treated this subject first from the utilitarian point of view, partly because it is difficult to give any 'Intuitional Method of Politics' which can plausibly claim, as Ethical Intuitionism does, to express or interpret the common sense of mankind. For in the first place Utilitarianism seems to be commonly accepted in Politics to a much greater extent than it is in the sphere of private conduct: many who recognize absolute rules of private duty, to be obeyed without regard to consequences, still hold that it is a question of expediency what actions and abstinences morally right or allowable should be made compulsory under legal penalties; and similarly that the right form of government for any society is to be determined on grounds of expediency only. There seem however to be others who hold that the promotion of the virtue of citizens as distinct from their happiness is the primary end of the State, and that the laws and constitution should be framed on this principle and churches and other educational organizations maintained for the same purpose. On this view, the whole of Ethics seems essentially prior to Politics: we must determine what Virtue is, before we can profitably consider what form of Government is best adapted to promote it. More frequently the connexion of Ethics and Politics is taken to lie in the notion of Justice; it being held that Justice is something that can be ascertained and sought apart from Utility, and that it ought to be realized in legislation and administration. One development of this latter view gives, as the counterpart of the common ethical doctrine of absolute *duties*, the political doctrine of absolute *rights*, to maintain which is the primary end of civil law. Then further, since among these 'natural rights' is reckoned the Right to Freedom, limited only by the equal freedom of others—indeed by many (as Kant) the Right to Freedom is held to include all truly natural rights—it is inferred that no man is originally and 'naturally' bound to obey any other: and thus we get the constitutional principle that the Right of Government to exist and operate must be derived from the consent of its subjects to a limitation of their natural rights. How far these rights are alienable, and how the consent of the members of any society to their partial alienation may be inferred, are thus the fundamental questions

in considering the legitimacy of any form of government. Again, in more or less distinct opposition to this last view it was once held, and the doctrine still lingers, that the natural right of government in any society is vested, as a kind of heritable though not transferable property, in the persons belonging to a particular line of descent.

It seems then that, on the Intuitional view, the precise determination of the duties of Justice and Good Faith (as well as of the duty of Order or Law-observance) is fundamentally important to Politics as well as Ethics: so that on this side the two studies can hardly be separated. But further, apart from any consideration of the main end and rational basis of Government, there remains an important inquiry, which we may call ethico-political, as to the extent to which Governments are bound to observe the same moral rules as private persons, in their dealings with their subjects as with other individuals or Governments. This inquiry hardly comes within the scope of the present treatise: but we may observe that here again the results are likely to vary considerably, according as we employ the Utilitarian or the Intuitional method.

§ 2. There is, however, another view which regards Ethics as dependent on Politics in quite a different manner: viz. as being an investigation not of what ought to be done here and now, but of what ought to be the rules of behaviour in an ideal society. So that the subject-matter of our science would be doubly ideal: as it would not only prescribe what ought to be done as distinct from what is, but what ought to be done in a society that itself *is* not, but only *ought* to be. Those who take this view adduce the analogy of Geometry.....

(Conclusion)..... How far [this foreknown social order] should be taken as such a pattern, is a question which would still have to be determined, and in the consideration of it the effects of our actions on the existing generation would after all be the most important element.

CHAPTER III.

REASON AND FEELING.

§ 1. In the first chapter I spoke of what ought to be done as being right and reasonable, that which Reason prescribes and urges us to do, either absolutely or as a means to an end apprehended as ultimately rational. This manner of speaking is employed by writers of different schools, and seems in accordance with the common view and language on this subject. For we commonly think that wrong conduct is essentially irrational, and can be shewn to be so by argument; and though we do not conceive that it is by reason alone that men are influenced to act rightly, we still hold that appeals to the reason are an essential part of all moral persuasion, and that part which concerns the moralist or moral philosopher as distinct from the preacher or moral rhetorician. On the other hand it has been widely maintained that, as Hume says, "Reason, meaning the judgment of truth and falsehood, can never of itself be any motive to the Will." It seems desirable to examine with some care the issue thus raised, before we proceed any further.

In discussing whether moral distinctions are perceived by the Reason, it is especially important to make clear the point at issue. As we know nothing of any faculty of the mind except from its supposed effects, and only assume different faculties to explain or express differences among the mental phenomena which we refer to them, we must always be prepared to state what characteristics in the feeling or cognition investigated such reference imports: thus only can we avoid

the sterile logomachy raised by such questions as "whether Reason desires or wills," &c.

By saying, then, that 'Reason prescribes or dictates an end,' I mean to imply two things; first that in judging that 'this action ought to be done,' or 'this end sought,' I am exercising what Hume calls the "judgment of truth or falsehood"; and secondly that this intellectual process is, or is inseparably combined with, a motive to action. It will be convenient to begin with the first proposition. This is hardly likely to be met with a direct counter-statement. No one expressly denies that this proposition 'I (or you) ought to do A' is in form legitimate, and that some propositions of this form are true and others false. But the common meaning of such propositions is by some writers implicitly rejected; and that chiefly in one or other of two ways, either of which is sustained by more or less plausible analogies.

In the first place it is said that the proposition really states no more than the existence of a particular emotion in the mind of the person who utters it: that when I say 'Truth ought to be spoken' or 'Truthspeaking is right,' I mean no more than that the idea of truthspeaking excites in my mind a feeling of approbation. And probably some degree of such emotion, commonly distinguished as 'moral sentiment,' always or ordinarily accompanies an ethical judgment. But it is absurd to say that a mere statement of my approbation of truthspeaking is properly given in the proposition 'Truth ought to be spoken'; otherwise the fact of another man's disapprobation might equally be expressed by saying 'Truth ought not to be spoken'; and thus we should have two coexistent facts stated in two mutually contradictory propositions. This is so obvious, that we must suppose that those who hold the view which I am combating do not really intend to deny it: but rather to maintain that the existence of the emotion is all that there is any *ground* for stating, or perhaps that it is all that any reasonable person is prepared on reflection to affirm. And no doubt there is a class of common statements, in form resembling statements of objective fact, which yet we are not commonly prepared to maintain as such if their validity is called in question. If I say that 'the air is sweet,' or 'the food

disagreeable,' it would not be exactly true to say that I mean no more than that I like the one or dislike the other: but if my statement is challenged, I shall probably content myself with affirming the existence of such feelings in my own mind. But there is a fundamental difference between this case and that of moral feelings. The emotion of moral approbation is inseparably bound up with the conviction, implicit or explicit, that the conduct approved is 'right' or 'ought to be done.' If I give up this conviction because others do not share it—which may very likely happen—I may no doubt still retain a strong liking for the conduct in question: but this liking will no longer have the special quality of 'moral sentiment' strictly so called. This difference between the two is often overlooked in ethical discussion: but any experience of a change in moral opinion produced by argument may afford an illustration of it. Suppose (*e.g.*) that any one habitually influenced by the sentiment of Veracity is convinced that under certain peculiar circumstances in which he finds himself, speaking truth is not right but wrong. A certain liking for veracity will probably still remain in his mind: he will feel a repugnance against violating the rule of truthspeaking: but it will be a feeling quite different in kind and degree from that which prompted him to veracity as a department of virtuous action. We might perhaps call the latter a 'moral' and the former a 'quasi-moral' sentiment.

The argument just given holds equally against the view that approbation is not the mere liking of an individual for certain kinds of conduct, but this complicated by a sympathetic representation of similar likings and aversions felt by other human beings. No doubt such sympathy is a normal concomitant of moral emotion, and when the former is absent, there is much greater difficulty in maintaining the latter: this however is partly because our moral beliefs commonly agree with those of other members of our society, and on this agreement depends to an important extent our confidence in the truth of these beliefs. But if, as in the case just supposed, we are really led by argument to a new moral belief, opposed not only to our own habitual sentiment but also to that of the society in which we live, we have a crucial experiment that proves the

existence of the moral sentiment proper as distinct from the represented sympathies of our fellow-men no less than from our own habitual likings and aversions. And even if we imaginatively extend the sympathies opposed to our convictions until they include those of the whole human race, against whom we imagine ourselves to stand as *Athanasius contra mundum*; still, so long as our conviction of duty is firm, the emotion which we call moral stands out in imagination quite distinct from the complex sympathy opposed to it, however much we extend, complicate and intensify the latter.

§ 2. So far, then, from being prepared to admit that the proposition 'A ought to be done' merely expresses the existence of a moral sentiment in myself or others, I find it strictly impossible so to regard my own moral judgments without eliminating from the concomitant sentiment the peculiar quality signified by the term 'moral.' There is, however, another view in which ethical judgments are considered to relate to the likings and aversions that men in general feel for certain kinds of conduct; not as sympathetically represented in the emotion of the person judging, and thus constituting the moral element in it, but as the causes of pain to the person of whom 'ought' is predicated. On this view, when we say that a man 'ought' to do anything, we mean that he is bound under penalties to do it; the particular penalty considered being the pain that will accrue to him directly or indirectly from a kind of conduct which his fellow-creatures dislike.

It cannot be denied that this interpretation has some plausibility. For in using, as we commonly do, the term 'moral obligation' or 'boundness' as equivalent to that contained in the verb 'ought' we imply an analogy between this notion and that of legal obligation: and in the case of law the connexion of 'obligation' and 'punishment' seems indissoluble: a law cannot be properly said to exist if it is habitually violated with impunity. But a more careful reflection on this very comparison seems to shew that it really affords an argument against the interpretation of 'ought' that I am now discussing. For the ideal distinction taken in common thought between legal and merely moral rules seems to lie in just this connexion of the former with punishment: we think that there

are some things which a man ought to be compelled to do, or forbear, and others which he ought to do or forbear without compulsion, and that the former alone fall properly within the sphere of law. And it is otherwise evident that what we mean when we say 'you ought to do this' is not merely 'you will be punished by public opinion if you do not': for we often join the two statements, clearly distinguishing their import: and further (since public opinion is known to be eminently fallible) there are many things which we judge men 'ought' to do, while perfectly aware that they will incur no serious social penalties for omitting them. The parallel with law may however be maintained in another way, by interpreting 'ought' as having reference to Divine penalties: which, no doubt, we commonly conceive to be adequate and universally applicable. Still the proposition 'I ought to do this' is so far from being equivalent to the proposition 'God will punish me if I do not,' that the former conviction is, in many minds, an important part of the grounds for believing the latter. Indeed when we appeal to the 'justice' (or other moral attributes) of God, as exhibited in punishing sinners and rewarding the righteous, we obviously mean—not only that God *will* thus punish and reward, but that it is 'right' for him to do so: which of course cannot mean that He is 'bound under penalties[1].'

At the same time I quite admit, as indeed I have already suggested in § 3 of chap. I., that we frequently pass judgments not very easy to distinguish from Ethical ones, in which the quasi-ethical notions do not, on reflection, seem to contain more than a reference to current opinions and sentiments. There is, in fact, in civilised societies a more or less definitely organized 'code of Public Opinion,' enforced by social penalties, which no moralist would maintain to be absolutely binding: or perhaps I should say *two* distinct codes, the one relating to graver, the other to lighter, matters; the Code of Honour, and the Code of Politeness or Etiquette. Each coincides to a considerable extent with the Code of Morality as ordinarily accepted; conduct that would bring dishonour is nearly always thought wrong; and the same may be said of conduct that is knowingly ill-bred or impolite, allowance being made for the comparative triviality

[1] 'Ought' is here inapplicable, for a reason presently given; cf. p. 20.

of the matters regulated by the Code of Etiquette. Hence in the ordinary thought of unreflective persons the duties imposed by either code are often undistinguished from moral duties: and indeed this indistinctness is almost inherent in the common meaning of many terms. For instance, if we say that a man has been 'dishonoured' by a cowardly act, it is not quite clear whether we mean that he has incurred contempt, or that he has deserved it, or both: as becomes evident when we take a case in which the Code of Honour comes into conflict with Morality. If (*e.g.*) a man were to incur social ostracism anywhere for refusing a duel on religious grounds, some would say that he was 'dishonoured,' though he had acted rightly, others that there could be no real dishonour in a virtuous act. A similar ambiguity seems to lurk in the common notion of 'improper' or 'incorrect' behaviour. Still in all such cases the ambiguity becomes evident on reflection: and when discovered, merely serves to illustrate further the distinction between 'rightness' or 'goodness' of conduct, strictly so called, and mere conformity to the standard of current opinion.

§ 3. It seems then that the notion of 'ought' or 'moral obligation' as used in our common ethical judgments, does not merely import (1) that there exists in the mind of the person judging a specific emotion (whether complicated or not by sympathetic representation of similar emotions in other minds); nor (2) that certain rules of conduct are supported by penalties which will follow on their violation (whether such penalties result from the general liking or aversion felt for the conduct prescribed or forbidden, or from some other source). What then, it may be asked, does it import? What definition can we give of 'ought,' 'right,' and other terms expressing the same fundamental notion? To this it might be answered that the notion is too elementary to admit of being made clearer by any formal definition. If however it appears that what the questioner wants is a complete account of the relation of Morality to other departments of the Known, we must add that it does not belong to Ethics to furnish this, but to some more comprehensive science: at any rate this task is not undertaken in the present treatise, which only attempts to methodize our moral judgments and reasonings, in which this

fundamental notion is necessarily used from first to last, in one form or another. There are, however, certain peculiarities in moral cognition, as compared with other kinds of knowledge, which it is important to point out. In the first place, we must distinguish the two quite different relations in which the moral agent stands to right conduct, according as he does or does not recognize it as such; and, correspondingly, two different senses in which 'rightness' is predicated, which are very liable to become mutually confusing. In one sense it is right for me to do what I think it right to do: but again, my thought may be wrong, so that what in another sense is right for me to do, may be really something different. It is convenient to call the former 'subjectively' and the latter 'objectively' right. Complete or absolute rightness requires the coincidence of the two. Generally, however, our moral judgments predicate objective rightness, unless the contrary is expressly indicated: they state what, while it is completely right if the agent thinks it is so, is in a certain sense right whether he thinks it so or not, and must be judged to be so by all rational beings who judge truly of the matter. Hence I have spoken of the cognition[1] of objective rightness as the cognition of a dictate or precept of Reason: reason being conceived impersonally, since all rational beings, in so far as they judge rationally, must necessarily judge similarly of the same matter[2]. The phrase implies further that in rational beings as such this cognition of rightness gives an impulse or motive to action: though in human beings, of course, this is only one motive among others which are liable to conflict with it, and is not always—perhaps not usually—a predominant motive. This possible conflict of motives is implied in the term 'dictate' or 'imperative'; which describes the relation of Reason to mere inclinations or non-

[1] By cognition I always mean what some would rather call "apparent cognition," that is, I do not mean to affirm the *validity* of the cognition, but only its existence as a psychical fact.

[2] It is said that "in morality we prescribe and dictate to ourselves." This is in a sense true, of course. The dictate of reason cannot, as such, influence my action unless by exercising *my* reason I cognize it. But the statement appears to me misleading, in so far as it ignores the difference between *rational* choice, in which the conduct chosen is in accordance with our conception of objective Right or Good, and mere *deliberate* choice, which involves no such conception.

rational impulses by comparing it to the relation between the will of a superior and the wills of his subordinates. This conflict seems also to be implied in the terms 'ought,' 'duty,' 'moral obligation,' as used in ordinary moral discourse: and hence these terms cannot be applied, like the generally equivalent terms 'right' and 'reasonable,' to the actions of rational beings to whom we cannot attribute impulses conflicting with reason. At the outset of this chapter I noticed that it was a disputed question 'whether Reason acts as a motive' at all: I do not, however, think that any one who accepts the view of ethical judgments maintained in the preceding section is likely to deny that such a judgment, in rational voluntary agents, is at least inseparably combined with an impulse to action of a peculiar kind, which it is necessary to distinguish from non-rational desires or inclinations. If this be granted, the question whether a bare cognition (or any purely intellectual operation) can or can not influence volition, does not seem to me one of practical importance, however interesting it may be from a psychological point of view[1].

§ 4. I am aware that some persons will be disposed to answer all the preceding argument by a simple denial that they can find in their consciousness any such absolute imperative as I have been trying to exhibit. If this is really the final result of self-examination in any case, there is no more to be said. I, at least, do not know how to impart the notion of moral obligation to any one who is entirely devoid of it. But in many cases where the notion does not appear to be explicit it will be found, I think, to be implied in some other conception in common use. Especially I would suggest that those who deny that they have any cognition of 'rightness' or 'duty,' should consider whether there is nothing that they judge to be 'good' or 'bad'; and then further consider whether by 'good' they do not mean 'desirable' in the sense of 'what *ought* to be desired,' or rather—since our desires are not altogether within the control of the will—'what *ought* to be sought or aimed at'; and by 'bad' similarly 'what ought to

[1] There still remains an ambiguity in the common use of 'ought,' which cannot well be removed till after the discussion on Free Will: cf. *post*, ch. v. p. 31, note.

be shunned.' It does not matter, at the present stage of our discussion, what it is that is thus judged to be good or bad; for nothing that has been said about 'absolute rightness' is intended as an argument in favour of the ethical method which I call Intuitionism as against Egoism or Utilitarianism. I am not maintaining that Reason prescribes certain kinds of conduct *per se*, without reference to ulterior ends: but that it prescribes something *per se*, whether that something be action or some further result to which the action is a means. For instance, in distinguishing the cognition of rightness from the cognition of a rule supported by penalties, I do not mean to affirm that it is not reasonable to be influenced by penalties; but only that if this is maintained the ethical judgment 'that pain *ought* to be avoided' must be expressly or implicitly passed. Similarly, nothing that I have said is inconsistent with the view that Truthspeaking is only valuable as a means to the preservation of society: only on that view I should find my absolute imperative in the expressed or implied proposition 'that society *ought* to be preserved.'

When, however, we include in our view the 'dictate of reason' that is implied in the assertion that anything is 'good' or 'desirable,' as well as that which is expressed in the assertion that anything is 'right' or 'morally obligatory,' we are exposed to another line of objection which must now be carefully considered. It is said that by 'good' no more is signified than the object of desire: that whatever we desire is *pro tanto* 'good' for us. No doubt (it is said) some desires are bad in so far as they prompt to mischievous actions: but this means that they prompt to actions for the consequences of which, when they arrive, we feel, on the whole, aversion more intense than the former desire. My 'good on the whole,' then, is merely what I actually should seek or aim at if such future aversions and desires were always present at the time of acting.

There is much in this view that seems to me true and important. I am quite willing to admit that the satisfaction of any desire is to a certain extent good: and that an equal regard for all the moments of our conscious experience—so far, at least, as the mere difference of their position in time is concerned—is an essential characteristic of rational conduct. Still

we can hardly accept the fact, that one never afterwards feels for the consequences of an action aversion strong enough to cause one to regret it, as a complete proof that one has acted for one's 'good on the whole.' For we reckon it among the worst consequences of some kinds of conduct that they alter men's tendencies to desire, and make them desire their lesser good more than their greater: and we think it all the worse for a man if he is never roused out of such a condition and lives till death the life of a contented pig, when he might have been something better. Shall we say then that a man's "true good" is what he would desire on the whole if all the consequences of the different lines of conduct open to him were actually exercising on him an impulsive force proportioned to the desires or aversions which they would excite if actually experienced? But such a hypothetical composition of impulsive forces involves so elaborate and difficult a conception, that it is surely paradoxical to say that this is what we *mean* when we talk of a man's 'good on the whole.'

In any case, however, I should still maintain that the notion of 'what ought to be aimed at' is now inseparable from the notion of 'one's good' as commonly used, whatever may be the primary meaning of the latter. The man who never yields to a desire, however strong, when he foresees that the consequences of yielding will rouse yet stronger aversion, is not merely a type from which actual human beings deviate—as they certainly do—but an ideal which we think they 'ought' to try to realize; such an effort therefore (we may say) is 'prescribed' or 'dictated' by reason, no less than the ordinary rules of morality are, in the view of Intuitionism.

CHAPTER IV.

PLEASURE AND DESIRE.

§ 1. In the preceding chapter I have left undetermined the emotional characteristics of the impulse that prompts us to obey the dictates of Reason. I have done so because these seem to be very different in different minds, and even to vary much and rapidly in the same mind, without any corresponding variation in the volitional direction of the impulse. For instance, in the mind of a rational Egoist the ruling impulse is generally what Butler and Hutcheson call a "calm" or "cool" self-love: whereas in the man who takes universal happiness as the end and standard of right conduct, the desire to do what is reasonable is commonly blended in varying degrees with sympathy and philanthropic enthusiasm. Again, if one conceives the dictating Reason—whatever its dictates may be—as external to oneself, the cognition of rightness is accompanied by a sentiment of Reverence for Authority; which may by some be conceived impersonally, but is more commonly regarded as the authority of a supreme Person, so that the sentiment blends with the affections normally excited by persons in different relations, and becomes Religious. While again, if we identify Reason and Self, Reverence for Authority blends with Self-respect: and again, the antithetical and even more powerful sentiment of Freedom is called in, if we consider the rational Self as liable to be enslaved by the usurping force of sensual impulses. Quite different again are the emotions of Aspiration or Admiration aroused by the conception of Virtue as an ideal of Moral Perfection or Beauty. Other phases of emotion might be mentioned, all having with these the common characteristic that they are inseparable from an apparent cognition,—implicit or explicit, direct or indirect,—of *rightness* in the conduct to

which they prompt. So that, although there may be important differences in their moral value owing to differences in their secondary effects or accompaniments, their primary moral effect does not vary without variation in the cognitive element of the moral consciousness. It is then with these cognitions that Ethics is primarily concerned: its object is to free them from doubt and error, and systematize them as far as possible.

There is, however, one view of the feelings which prompt to voluntary action, which is sometimes thought to be logically connected with a special theory of the principles on which such action ought to be regulated, and so to decide summarily the fundamental question of ethical method. I mean the view that volition is always determined by the greatest pleasure (or absence of pain) in prospect. If in the case of any conflict of impulses all the conflicting desires and aversions are strictly proportioned to pleasures and pains in prospect, it seems natural to infer that the only possible method of Ethics would be Egoistic Hedonism: for I cannot rationally think that one end of action has been definitely determined for me by unvarying psychological laws, and another conflicting end prescribed for me by Reason. If my own greatest pleasure—or what I think such—is what I cannot help aiming at, it cannot be true that I ought to aim at something else.

Reflection however shews that this inference, however obvious, is certainly not cogent. For it proceeds on the assumption that 'greatest apparent pleasure' is determined prior to raising the question as to Rightness or Reasonableness of Conduct: whereas it is manifestly possible that our prospect of pleasure resulting from any course of conduct may largely depend on our conception of it as right or otherwise: and in fact this must be normally the case with the conduct of conscientious persons, if the psychological theory above-mentioned is sound. Indeed on looking closer it rather appears that the adoption of this doctrine, which I may call psychological Hedonism in its extreme form, is so far from leading logically to ethical Hedonism that it is really incompatible with it. For a psychological law invariably realized in my conduct does not admit of being conceived as a 'precept' or 'dictate' of reason: this latter must be a rule from which I am conscious of being able to deviate.

But the truth is that no one holds in any practical sense that this strict proportion is actually maintained between desire and foreseen pleasure. It is a matter of common experience that the resultant or prevailing desire in men is often directed towards what (even in the moment of yielding to the desire) they think likely to cause them more pain than pleasure on the whole. "Video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor" is as applicable to the Epicurean as it is to any one else. This is definitely stated in the most popular of the treatises in which psychological Hedonism has recently been advocated. Men often, says J. S. Mill[1], not from merely intellectual deficiences, but from "infirmity of character, make their election for the nearer good, though they know it to be less valuable: and this no less when the choice is between two bodily pleasures...they pursue sensual indulgences to the injury of health, though perfectly aware that health is the greater good."

It is just because this is so that psychological Hedonism is of some real ethical importance. If it were really the case that each of us in acting *does* aim at *some* pleasure (or absence of pain) to himself, it would forcibly suggest as an ideal that he *ought* to seek his own *greatest* pleasure. It is important to observe that this is merely a suggestion. There is no inconsistency in holding that the precepts of reason have no reference to pleasure as an end, and yet that they actually operate in producing volition only in so far as they are connected with prospective pleasures and pains of some kind. In fact, not a few moralists seem to have held the two opinions together. Still though there is no cogent inference possible from the psychological generalization that his own pleasure is what each desires, to the ethical principle that his own greatest pleasure is for each the most desirable or ultimate end, we seem to have a tendency to pass from the one position to the other. If we once admit that our actual motives are always pleasures and pains of some kind, it seems unreasonable to be moved by them out of proportion to their pleasantness and painfulness, and not to choose the greatest pleasure or least pain on the whole. Again, it is commonly thought that an act in the highest sense virtuous must be done for its own sake and not for the sake

[1] *Utilitarianism*, c. 2, p. 14.

of the attendant pleasure, even if that be the pleasure of the moral sense: and that if I do an act from the sole desire of obtaining the glow of moral self-approbation which I believe will attend its performance, the act will not be truly virtuous. But if psychological Hedonism were true this opinion would have to be abandoned.

It seems therefore important to subject this generalization, even in its more indefinite form, to a careful examination.....

.. (§ 2.)... Hunger, so far as I can observe, is a direct impulse to eat food.....

(Cf. p. 36 of Ed. 1.) When, however, the desire is having its natural effect in causing the actions which tend to the attainment of its object, it seems to be commonly a more or less pleasurable consciousness: even when this attainment is still remote. Or at least the consciousness of eager activity, in which this desire is an essential element, is highly pleasurable: and in fact such pleasures, which we may call generally the pleasures of Pursuit, constitute a considerable item in the total enjoyment of life. Indeed it is almost a commonplace to say that they are more important than the pleasures of Attainment: and in many cases it is the prospect of the former rather than of the latter that induces us to engage in the pursuit. In such cases it is peculiarly easy to distinguish the desire of the object pursued from a desire of the pleasure of attaining it: as in fact attainment is not originally represented in the mind as a source of pleasure, but only becomes pleasant in prospect because the pursuit itself stimulates a desire for what is pursued.....

(Cf. p. 41 of Ed. 1.) So far, then, from our conscious active impulses being always directed towards the production of agreeable sensations in ourselves, it would seem that we find everywhere in consciousness extra-regarding impulses, directed towards something that is not pleasure; and, in fact, that a most important part of our pleasure depends upon the existence of such impulses.....

§ 4. The psychological observations on which my argument is based will not perhaps be directly controverted, at least to such an extent as to involve my main conclusion: but there are two lines of reasoning by which it has been attempted to weaken the force of this conclusion without directly denying it.

In the first place, it is urged that Pleasure, though not the only conscious aim of human action, is yet always the result to which it is unconsciously directed. The proposition would be difficult to disprove: since no one denies that pleasure in some degree normally accompanies the attainment of a desired end: and when once we go beyond the testimony of consciousness there seems to be no clear method of determining which among the consequences of any action is the end at which it is aimed. For the same reason, however, the proposition is at any rate equally difficult to prove. But I should go further, and maintain that if we seriously set ourselves to consider human action on its unconscious side, we can only conceive it as a combination of movements of the parts of a material organism: and that if we try to ascertain what the 'end' in any case of such movements is, it is natural to conclude that it is some material result, some organic condition conducive to the preservation either of the individual organism or of the race to which it belongs. In fact, the doctrine that pleasure (or the absence of pain) is the end of all human action can neither be supported by the results of introspection, nor by the results of external observation and inference: it rather seems to be reached by an arbitrary and illegitimate combination of the two.

But again, it is sometimes said that whatever be the case with our present adult consciousness, our original impulses were all directed towards pleasure, and that any impulses otherwise directed are derived from these by "association of ideas." I have seen no evidence tending to prove this: so far as we can observe the consciousness of children, the two elements, extra-regarding impulse and desire for pleasure, seem to coexist in the same manner as they do in mature life. In so far as there is any difference, it seems to be in the opposite direction; as the actions of children being more instinctive and less reflective are more prompted by extra-regarding impulse, and less by conscious aim at pleasure. No doubt the two kinds of impulse, as we trace them back to more rudimentary phases of consciousness, gradually become indistinguishable: but this obviously does not justify us in identifying with either of the two the more indefinite impulse out of which both have been developed.

But even supposing it were found that our earliest appetites were all merely appetites for pleasure, it would have little bearing on the present question. What I am concerned to maintain is that men do not *now* normally desire pleasure alone, but to an important extent other things also: some in particular having impulses towards virtue, which may and do conflict with their conscious desire for their own pleasure. To say in answer to this that all men *once* desired pleasure is, from an ethical point of view, irrelevant: except on the assumption that there is an original type of man's appetitive nature, to which, as such, it is right or best for him to conform. But probably no Hedonist would expressly maintain this; though such an assumption, no doubt, is frequently made by writers of the Intuitional school.

Note.—An interesting criticism on the views maintained in this chapter has been appended by Prof. Bain to c. 8 of his treatise on the Will [*The Emotions and the Will*, Ed. III.]. He thinks it true that we are not "every moment occupied with the thought of the subjective pleasure or pain connected with our pursuits;" and further, that "it is an advantage to intermit our subjectivity...a merit and recommendation of certain exercises, that they take us out of ourselves for the time." But he thinks that there is nothing in this "to destroy our character as rational beings, which is to desire everything exactly according to its pleasure value." For though "our desires do fasten upon the indifferent objective accompaniments of our pleasures...they do not set up these indifferent accompaniments as ends of pursuit, even when divorced from the pleasures that brought them into notice;" *e. g.* "when a man loses his enjoyment in hunting, he does not continue to desire hunting," &c.

I do not think that Mr Bain has quite apprehended the point of my argument as regards the pleasures of successful pursuit (which I have tried to make more clear in this edition). Let me take as an illustration of the point at issue the pleasure of scientific curiosity. I quite admit that one is sustained in the pursuit of truth by a consciousness of the pleasure it affords: and that if it ceased to yield such pleasure it would probably be abandoned. But I urge that this specific enjoyment is strictly unattainable, so long as one desires knowledge *merely* as a means to it: until the desire of knowledge for its own sake is somehow aroused in us, we cannot experience either the agreeable ardour of investigation or the true delight of discovery. Then when this desire has become strong, it may possibly, though it does not ordinarily, conflict with our desire for our pleasure on the whole: so that the love of knowledge may be not only disinterested but even self-sacrificing. I ought to say that Mr Bain recognizes self-sacrifice as an actual fact, but only as

prompted by sympathy with other human (or sentient) beings. I quite agree with him, that on no other supposition could "the dominion of Rome have ever been established, or England have attained her present power." But I think that this recognition is too restricted: and that we may similarly say that without other strictly disinterested impulses, the fabric of science would not have been constructed, nor the treasures of art accumulated.

CHAPTER V.

FREE WILL.

§ 1. In the preceding chapters I have treated first of rational, and secondly of disinterested action, without introducing the vexed question of the Freedom of the Will. The metaphysical difficulties connected with this question have been proved by long dialectical experience to be so great, that I am anxious to confine them within as strict limits as I can, and keep as much of my subject as possible free from their perturbing influence....

We are sometimes conscious of deliberately preferring what we clearly see to be an irrational course of action[1].....

§ 3. We must conclude, then, that against the formidable array of cumulative evidence offered for Determinism there is but one opposing argument of real force; the immediate affirmation of consciousness in the moment of deliberate action. And certainly, in the case of actions in which I have a distinct consciousness of choosing between alternatives of conduct, one of which I conceive as right or reasonable, I find it impossible not to think that I can now choose to do what I so conceive, however strong may be my inclination to act unreasonably, and however uniformly I may have yielded to such inclinations in the past. This belief seems to me bound up with the belief that I *ought*,

[1] The difficulty which Socrates and the Socratic schools had in conceiving a man to choose deliberately what he knows to be bad for him—a difficulty which drives Aristotle into real Determinism in his account of purposed action, even while he is expressly maintaining the "voluntariness" and "responsibility" of vice—seems hardly to exist for the modern mind. This is at least partly due to the fact that we have separated the notion of "one's own good" into the two *primâ facie* distinct notions of "interest" and "duty:" thus, being familiar with the conception of deliberate choice, consciously opposed *either* to interest *or* to duty, we can easily conceive of such choice in conscious opposition to both: though this is not, I think, a common phenomenon.

in the strictest sense[1], to choose any course; when I have ascertained the former to be to any extent illusory, the latter is immediately restricted to a corresponding extent. I recognize that each concession to vicious desire makes the difficulty of resisting it greater when the desire recurs: but the difficulty always seems to remain separated by an impassable gulf from impossibility. Whether this amounts to an affirmation of what any Libertarian metaphysicians have maintained as 'Free Will,' is a difficult and subtle question. But at any rate it will be admitted that the absence of adequate motive to do what I judge to be reasonable cannot be regarded by me, in deliberation, as a rational ground for not doing it. And since it is with the grounds or reasons of rational action, and not with the causes of irrational action, that Ethics is primarily concerned; there seems to be so far no necessity to determine the metaphysical validity of the consciousness of freedom to choose what is reasonable.

It may however be urged that in considering how we ought to act in any case, though we cannot suppose the action that is the immediate object of consideration to be irrational, we are obliged to take into account the probable future actions of others, and also of ourselves; and that with regard to these it is necessary to decide the question of Free Will, in order that we may know whether the future is capable of being predicted from the past. But here, again, it seems to me that no definite practical consequences would logically follow from this decision. For however far we may go in admitting Free Will as a cause, the operation of which may falsify the most scientific forecasts of human action, still since it is *ex hypothesi* an absolutely unknown cause, the admission of it cannot modify any such forecasts: at most, it can only affect our reliance on them.

We may illustrate this by an imaginary extreme case. Suppose we were somehow convinced that all the stars were endowed with Free Will, and that they only maintained their periodic motions by the continual exercise of free choice, in

[1] In a looser use of 'ought,' which cannot conveniently be discarded, we sometimes judge that *A* 'ought' to act or feel as a better man would act or feel in his place, though we may know that *A* could not achieve this by any effort of will. Cf. *post*, B. III. c. 1.

resistance to strong centrifugal or centripetal inclinations. Our general confidence in the future of the solar system might reasonably be impaired, though it is not easy to say how much[1]: but the details of our astronomical calculations would be clearly unaffected: the free wills could in no way be taken as an element in the reckoning. And the case would be similar, I suppose, in the forecast of human conduct, if psychology and sociology should ever become exact sciences. At present, however, they are so far from being such that this additional element of uncertainty can hardly have even any emotional effect.

To sum up, we may say that, in so far as we reason to any definite conclusions concerning the future actions of ourselves or others, we must consider them as determined by unvarying laws: if they are not completely so determined our reasoning is *pro tanto* liable to error: but no other is open to us. While on the other hand, when we are ascertaining (on any principles) what choice it is reasonable to make between two alternatives of conduct, it is just as impossible to apply determinist assumptions as it was in the former case inevitable. And from neither point of view does it seem to be of any general practical importance to decide the metaphysical question at issue in the Free-will Controversy.

§ 4. It is, however, of obvious practical importance to ascertain precisely how far the power of the will (whether metaphysically free or not) actually extends: for this defines the range within which ethical judgments are in the strictest sense applicable. This inquiry is quite independent of the question of metaphysical freedom; we might state it in Determinist terms as an inquiry into the range of effects which it would be possible to cause by human volition, provided that adequate motive were not wanting. These effects seem to be of three kinds: first, changes in the external world consequent upon muscular contractions: secondly, changes in the train of ideas and feelings that constitutes our conscious life: and thirdly, changes in the permanent tendencies to action that compose what is called our character.....

[1] In order to determine this we shall require first to settle another disputed question, as to the general reasonableness of our expectation that the future will resemble the past.

If this account of the range of volition be accepted, it will, I trust, dispel any lingering belief which the argument of the preceding section may have left in the reader's mind that some general practical consequences must logically result from the adoption of Libertarianism or Determinism. For it may have been vaguely thought that while on the Determinist theory it would be wrong to perform a single act of virtue if we had no ground for believing that we should hereafter duly follow it up; on the assumption of Freedom we should boldly do always what would be best if consistently followed up, being conscious that such consistency is in our power. But the supposed difference vanishes, if it be admitted that by any effort of resolution at the present moment we can only produce a certain limited effect upon our character and so indirectly upon our action at some future time, and that immediate consciousness cannot tell us that this effect will be adequate to the occasion, nor indeed how great it will really prove to be. For the most extreme.....

§ 5. There is however, as I before said, one special but very important department of Ethics in which the question of Free Will again emerges in a different way: I mean in the determination of just conduct[1].....

[1] Cf. Book III. c. 5: where I endeavour to shew that even here the difference of view is ultimately found to have no practical effects.

CHAPTER VI.

ETHICAL PRINCIPLES AND METHODS.

§ 1. THE results of the three preceding chapters may be briefly stated as follows.

The aim of Ethics is to render scientific—*i.e.* true, and as far as possible systematic—the apparent cognitions that most men have of the rightness or reasonableness of conduct, whether the conduct be considered as right in itself, or as the means to some end conceived as ultimately good. These cognitions are normally accompanied by emotions of various kinds, known as "moral sentiments:" but the ethical judgment cannot be explained as affirming merely the evidence of such a sentiment: indeed it is an essential characteristic of a moral feeling that it is bound up with an apparent cognition of something more than mere feeling. Such cognitions, again, I have called 'dictates,' or 'imperatives'; because, in so far as they relate to conduct on which one is deliberating, they are accompanied by a certain impulse to do the acts recognized as right. For ethical purposes it is not of primary importance to determine anything more about this impulse than the direction in which it prompts: if a man acts in accordance with his conceptions of duty, the main question is, whether these conceptions are true or false: the exact characteristics of the emotional states that precede his volitions are a matter of only secondary concern. And this remains true even if the force actually operating on his will is mere desire for the pleasures that he foresees will attend right conduct, or aversion to the pains that will result from doing wrong: though we observe that in this case his action does not correspond to our common

notion of strictly virtuous conduct: and though there seems to be no ground for regarding such desires and aversions as the sole, or even the normal motives of human volitions. Nor, again, is it necessary to determine whether we are always, metaphysically speaking, 'free' to do what we see to be right. What I 'ought' to do, in the strictest use of the word 'ought,' is always 'in my power,' in the sense that there is no obstacle to my doing it except absence of adequate motive; and it is impossible for me, in deliberation, to regard such absence of motive as a reason for not doing what I otherwise judge to be reasonable.

What then do we commonly regard as valid ultimate reasons for acting or abstaining? This, as was said, is the starting point for the discussions of the present treatise: which is not concerned with proving or disproving the validity of any such reasons, but merely with the critical exposition of the different 'methods'—or rational procedures for determining right conduct in any particular case—which are logically connected with the different principles generally accepted. In the first chapter we found that such reasons were supplied by the notions of Happiness, Perfection, and Virtue or Duty.....

(On p. 60.) But again, it is a common opinion that of truly right action a great part is not done for any ultimate end, but merely because the action itself is 'Virtuous,' or 'our Duty': the terms 'Virtue' or 'Duty' being thought to state the ultimate reason for doing it. This is commonly called the Intuitional view of morals,.....

§ 2. It may seem, however, that I have by no means exhausted the list of reasons which are widely accepted as ultimate grounds of action. Many religious persons think that the highest reason for doing anything is that it is God's Will: while to others such ends as 'Self-realization' or 'Self-development' and 'Life according to nature' appear really ultimate. And it is not hard to understand why these principles are felt to supply deeper and more completely satisfying answers to the fundamental question of Ethics, than those discussed in the preceding section. For the notions just mentioned do not merely define 'what ought to be,' as such; they define

it in an apparently simple and universal relation to what is. God, Nature, Self, are the fundamental facts of existence; the knowledge of what will accomplish God's Will, what is 'according to Nature,' what will realize the true Self in each of us, would seem to solve the deepest problems of Metaphysics as well as of Ethics. But just because these notions combine the ideal with the actual, the complete examination of them belongs not to ethics as I define it, but to philosophy—or whatever we call the supreme architectonic study which is concerned with the relations of all objects of knowledge. When, on the other hand, we confine our attention to the strictly practical import of each notion, we find that, in so far as it is scientifically ascertainable, it always takes one or other of the forms previously given. To begin with the theological conception of 'God's Will.' Here the connexion between 'what is' and 'what ought to be' is perfectly clear and explicit. The content of God's Will we conceive as presently existing, in idea: its actualization is the end to be aimed at. There is indeed a difficulty in understanding how God's Will can fail to be realized, whether we do right or wrong: or how, if it cannot fail to be realized in either case, its realization can be the ultimate reason for doing right. But this difficulty it belongs to Theology rather than Ethics to solve. The practical question is, assuming that God wills in a special sense what we ought to do, how we are to ascertain this in any particular case. This must be either by Revelation or by Reason, or by both combined. The former is commonly distinguished as "internal" and "external." Internal revelation must be either ecstatic, in which case it does not seem possible to systematize its results at all; or not ecstatic, in which case its operation cannot be introspectively distinguished from that of our ordinary cognitive faculties, and so the 'Divine Will revealed' would be only another form of 'Duty intuitively known.' If, again, an external Revelation is proposed as the standard, we are obviously carried beyond the range of our science: in fact Ethics, in this case, must be pursued as a department of Scriptural Interpretation. On the other hand, when we try to ascertain by reason the Divine Will, the practical result is always found to coincide with that of one or other of the methods above delineated. For

either it is assumed that God desires the happiness of men, in which case our efforts should be concentrated on its production: or that He desires their perfection and that that should be our end: or that whatever His end may be (into which perhaps we have no right to inquire) His Laws are immediately cognizable, being in fact the first principles of Intuitionism. Or else it is explained that God's Will is to be learnt by examining our own constitution or that of the world we are in: so that 'Conformity to God's Will' would resolve itself into 'self-realization,' or 'life according to nature.' In any case, this notion, though it may supply a new motive for doing what we believe to be right, does not—apart from Revelation—suggest any special criterion of rightness. It rather presents itself as a common form under which a religious mind is disposed to regard whatever method of determining conduct it apprehends to be rational.

The implication of 'what is' and 'what ought to be' in the notion of 'Conformity to Nature' and 'Self-realization' is somewhat more difficult to disentangle. The latter it will be convenient to consider in the following chapter: where I distinguish the different interpretations of the term 'Egoism,' which I have taken to denote one of the three principal species of ethical method. As regards the former, in order to obtain a principle distinct from 'Self-realization,' we must suppose that the 'Nature' to which we are to conform is not each one's own individual nature, but human nature generally: that we are to find the standard in a certain type of human existence which we can somehow abstract from observation of actual human lives. The belief that it is our duty to conform to such a type is clearly due to the Theism implicit in the notion of 'nature'; that is, to the more or less definite recognition of Design exhibited in the empirically known world. It can only be on this assumption that men have found guidance for conduct in the *common* as opposed to the rare and exceptional, or the *original* as opposed to that which is later in development; or, negatively, in that which is not due to the deliberate action of human wills. For surely no one would maintain that these characteristics, considered in themselves and not as indications of design, are clear criteria of the reasonable in conduct: and that it is absolutely our duty to do what most persons do, or

what our ancestors did, or what our infantile impulses suggested, or what we should have been impelled to do, but for the direct or indirect influence of society. Can we, then, ascertain by contemplating the physical constitution of human beings, and the *ensemble* of their impulses and dispositions, what kind of life they were designed to live? It is, perhaps, not difficult to describe, in a way that all would accept, the general outline of man's natural life; but we can hardly obtain from such contemplation a method for solving practical problems. For it does not help us to say with Butler "that the supremacy of Reason is Natural," as we start by assuming that we are to do what Reason prescribes, and that this is conformity to Nature, and so our line of thought would become circular: the Nature that we are to follow must be distinguished from our Practical Reason, if it is to become a guide to it. In a sense, as Butler observes, any impulse is natural: but it is manifestly idle to bid us follow Nature in this sense: for the question of duty is never raised except when we are conscious of a conflict of impulses, and wish to know which to follow. And it will scarcely be said that we are always to follow the impulse that is felt as the strongest: at least this would be rather a supersession than an interpretation of the dictates of reason, and would often lead to conduct universally condemned. Nor does it seem, on reflection, that any of the three criteria above mentioned, which men have used in determining the application of the common notion of "natural," can serve our purpose.....

And if we take a more physical view of our nature and endeavour to ascertain for what end our corporeal frame was constructed, we find that such contemplation determines very little. We can perhaps tell from our nutritive system that we are intended to take food, and to exercise our various muscles in some way or other, and similarly our brain and organs of sense. But this carries us a very trifling way, for the practical question almost always is, not whether we are to use our organs or leave them unused, but to what extent or in what manner we are to use them: and when men attempt to enunciate the teachings of Nature on these points, they are always found either to blend confusedly observations of what exists to intuitions of what ought to be, or at least to

pass from the former to the latter by a transition which, however easy and familiar it may be to their minds, cannot be exhibited as a logical process of inference.

Nor, again, does it help us to adopt the more modern view of Nature, which regards the organic world as exhibiting, not an aggregate of fixed types, but a continuous and gradual process of changing life. For granting that this 'evolution'—as the name implies—is not merely a process from old to new, but a progress from less to more of certain definite characteristics; no one, I think, will deliberately maintain that we ought *therefore* to take these characteristics as Ultimate Good, and make it our whole endeavour to accelerate the arrival of an inevitable future. That whatever is to be will be better than what is, we all hope; but there seems to be no more reason for summarily identifying 'what ought to be' with 'what certainly will be,' than for finding it in 'what commonly is,' or 'what originally was.'

On the whole, it appears to me that no definition that has ever been offered of the Natural exhibits this notion as capable of furnishing an ethical first principle. And no one maintains that 'natural' like 'beautiful' is a notion that though indefinable is yet clear, being derived from a simple unanalysable impression. I am far from denying that what is right is necessarily conformable to Nature, or to the Divine Will, and that these latter notions supply the ultimate ground and reasonable motive for doing what is right. I only point out that they are not in themselves sufficiently precise to give a practical criterion of the rightness of actions.

§ 3.... In the meantime the list of first principles already given seems to include all that have a *primâ facie* claim to be included: and to afford the most convenient classification for the current modes of determining right conduct. And it corresponds to what seem the most fundamental distinctions that we apply to human existence: the distinction between the conscious being and the stream of conscious experience, and the distinction (within this latter) of Action and Feeling. For the desirable condition of a human being, considered as a permanent entity, we call its Perfection: while by Virtue or Duty, we mean the kind of Action that we consider good and worthy to be done: and similarly by Happiness or Pleasure we mean the

kind of Feeling that is *per se* desirable. At the same time I do not profess to prove *à priori* that there are these practical first principles and no more.....

On the other hand some readers may be expected to blame the list for excess rather than defect....Now in my first chapter (p. 9) I have explained that the methods which take Perfection as the ultimate end may be conveniently treated as varieties of Intuitionism: since, in the common notion of Perfection, Moral Perfection is preeminent, while by 'Moral Perfection' is commonly meant dispositions and habits tending to good action, the goodness being determined by direct intuition. But any identification or blending of Egoistic and Universalistic Hedonism, and even any representation of their differences as secondary and subordinate, ought, I think, to be carefully avoided: as such a *rapprochement* encourages a serious misapprehension of both the historical and the philosophical relations of these methods to the Intuitional or Common-Sense Morality. And the contrast between aiming at one's own and aiming at the general happiness is at any rate *primâ facie* one of the most fundamental that morality exhibits.....

.....At the same time it is not difficult to find reasons for this close union between Epicureanism and the modern, or Benthamite, Utilitarianism.....

And such a reason is found in the theory of human action held by Bentham (and generally speaking by his disciples), which has been discussed in a previous chapter. While firmly maintaining the "greatest happiness of the greatest number[1]" as the "true standard for whatever is right or wrong in human action," Bentham held no less firmly that every human being always does aim at his own greatest apparent happiness. He affirms, in the somewhat verbose precision of his later style, that "on the occasion of every act he exercises, every human being is led to pursue that line of conduct which, according to his view of the case, taken by him at the moment, will be in the highest degree contributory to his own greatest happiness, whatsoever be the effect of it in relation to the happiness of other similar beings, any or all of them taken together." He

[1] He afterwards omitted the last four words of the formula, as unnecessary and misleading.

goes on to refer those who doubt to the "existence of the human species as being itself a proof, and a conclusive one."

On this view, it is useless to point out to a man the conduct that would conduce to the general happiness, unless you convince him at the same time that it would conduce to his own. Hence egoistic and universalistic considerations must necessarily be combined in any practical treatment of morality: and this being so, it was perhaps to be expected that many disciples of Bentham would go further, and attempt to base on the egoism which they accept as inevitable the universalistic hedonism which they approve and inculcate. And accordingly we find that the latest expositor of utilitarianism, J. S. Mill, does try to establish a logical connexion between the psychological and ethical principles, which he holds in common with Bentham....

CHAPTER VII.

EGOISM AND SELF-LOVE.

§ 1 (on p. 75)..... It is thought that the best way of seeking happiness is to give free play to one's nature. This view we shall hereafter consider more fully in the course of our examination of Hedonism. While according to the former interpretation rational Self-development is really identical with the pursuit of Perfection for oneself: since it obviously does not in any way modify the standard of Perfection to emphasize the point that it is 'one's own' that is aimed at.

The notion, then, of Self-realization is to be avoided in a treatise on ethical method, on account of its indefiniteness: and for a similar reason we must discard a common account of Egoism which describes its ultimate end as the 'good' of the individual.....

Even the English term Happiness is not free from ambiguity. It seems to be commonly used in Bentham's way as convertible with Pleasure: or rather as denoting that of which the elements are pleasures. Still it is never quite certain that when a man speaks of Happiness he does not include, in indefinite combination with pleasure, something else which he reckons ultimately desirable: so that even this term, if not further defined, may involve us in serious misunderstandings.

CHAPTER VIII.

INTUITIONISM.

§ 2. It should be observed that the antithesis between Intuitionism and Hedonism is often stated in such a way as to imply that the only consequences of actions which can possibly be of ethical importance are pleasures and pains. It is, however, quite conceivable that men should judge remote as well as immediate events to be in themselves desirable, without considering them in relation to the feelings of sentient beings. Indeed we not unfrequently find men who, while they judge the conduct of others and shape their own by a consideration of remote effects, yet seem to regard not pleasures and pains but some other kind of effects as intrinsically and ultimately desirable: such as the promotion of Art or Knowledge, generally or in some particular department. Such a view, if expressly stated, would probably be classed by many as Intuitional; but if so the antithesis implied by the term would be a different one: it would be meant that these ultimate ends are judged to be good immediately, and not by 'induction from experience' of the pleasures which they produce. In this way we frequently hear of 'intuitive' or '*à priori*' as contrasted with 'inductive' or '*à posteriori*' morality; where the latter terms are used as synonymous with Hedonism of some kind. But such a contrast seems to indicate a certain confusion of thought. For what the 'inductive' moralist professes to know *à posteriori*, by induction from experience, is commonly not the same thing as what the intuitive moralist professes to know by intuition. In the former case it is the conduciveness to pleasure of certain kinds of action that is methodically ascertained: in the latter case, their

rightness: there is therefore no proper opposition. If Hedonism presents itself as a system of Ethics, and claims to give practical guidance, this can only be in virtue of the principle that pleasure is the only reasonable ultimate end of human action. It is true that this principle is often not explicitly stated: but it is always necessarily implied, and it obviously cannot be known by induction from experience. Experience can at most tell us that all men always do seek pleasure (that it does not support this conclusion I have already tried to shew): it cannot tell us that any one ought to seek it. This latter proposition is therefore as 'intuitive' as the statement of any other ultimate end.....

[The view that] recognizes simple immediate intuitions alone and rejects all modes of reasoning to moral conclusions..... we may describe as one phase or variety of the Intuitional method, if we may extend the term 'method' to include a procedure that is completed in a single judgment.

§ 3. .....a second Intuitional Method, of which the fundamental assumption is that we can discern certain general rules with really clear and finally valid intuition, will chiefly occupy us in Book III.

However there still remain minds to which the 'Morality of Common Sense' (as we may call it), even when made as precise and orderly as possible, is not satisfactory as a system, although they have no disposition to question its general authority. They find it difficult to accept as scientific first principles the moral generalities that they obtain by reflection on the ordinary thought of mankind. Even if these rules can be so defined as perfectly to fit together and cover the whole field of human conduct, without coming into conflict and without leaving any questions unanswered: still the resulting code seems an accidental aggregate of precepts, which stands in need of some rational synthesis. In short, without being disposed to deny that conduct commonly judged to be right is so, we may yet require some deeper explanation *why* it is so. From this demand springs a third species or phase of Intuitionism, which, while accepting the morality of common sense as in the main sound, still attempts to find for it a philosophic basis which it does not itself offer.....

§ 4. The three phases of Intuitionism just described may be treated as three stages in the scientific development of Intuitive Morality: we may term them respectively Perceptional, Dogmatic, and Rational or Philosophical. The last-mentioned obviously admits of great variation: in fact, as yet I have presented it only as a problem,.....for systematic direction of conduct, we require to know on what judgments we may rely as ultimately valid. Hence it would be desirable that professional moralists of the Intuitional school should take more care than they sometimes do to make this point clear in expounding their system. I observe, for example, that Dugald Stewart uses the term "perception" to denote the immediate operation of the moral faculty;.....At the same time, in describing what is thus perceived, he always seems to have in view general rules or notions[1].

..... (On p. 91.) when ethical discussion thus passed over into psychological analysis and classification, the conception of the objectivity of duty, on which the authority of moral sentiment depends, fell gradually out of view, without its being perceived how serious the loss was: for example, we find Hutcheson asking why the moral sense should not vary in different human beings, as the palate does, without dreaming that there is any peril to morality in admitting such variations as legitimate. When, however, the new doctrine was endorsed by the dreaded name of Hume, its dangerous nature, and the need of bringing again into prominence the cognitive element of the moral consciousness, was clearly seen.

[1] When Moral distinctions are said to be apprehended 'by the Reason,' it seems to be generally implied that they are universal in form. In fact, it is only by a certain extension of the common use of the term—on which I have ventured in order to avoid complication—that I have employed it (in c. 3) so as to include the bare apprehension of what is right here and now.

CHAPTER IX.

GOOD.

§ 1. We have hitherto spoken of the quality of conduct discerned by our moral faculty as 'rightness,' which is the term commonly used by English moralists. We have regarded this term, and its equivalents in ordinary use, as implying the existence of an absolute rule or imperative, prescribing certain actions in themselves, or a certain ultimate end of actions. It seems impossible for any moralist definitely to exclude the notion expressed by these terms; for every moralist outlines an ideal of conduct which he maintains to be a true ideal, and from which men may possibly deviate: even the Epicurean does this when he shews men by what actions each may obtain the greatest amount of pleasure possible for him: in so far, then, as these actions are not what men actually do perform, he can hardly refuse to describe them as actions that 'ought' to be performed.

And hence we may perhaps say that this notion of 'ought,' when once it has been developed, is a necessary form of our moral apprehension, just as space is now a necessary form of our sense-perceptions.

Still it is possible to take a view of duty in which this notion is at any rate only latent or implicit, and the moral ideal is presented as attractive rather than imperative. That is, we may consider the action to which we are morally prompted as in itself 'good' or 'desirable[1].' This, as was before

[1] In modern language the term 'Good' as applied to conduct has distinctly the specific meaning of 'morally excellent.' It seems however legitimate, and convenient for our present purpose, to consider this only as a special application of the fundamental notion of 'Good' = 'intrinsically desirable.'

noticed, was the fundamental ethical conception in the Greek schools of Moral Philosophy generally; including even the Stoics, though their system is in this respect a transitional link between ancient and modern ethics. And this historical illustration may serve to exhibit one important result of substituting the idea of 'goodness' for that of 'rightness,' which at first sight might be thought purely formal or even verbal.....

And we may perhaps observe as a fundamental characteristic of the process of ethical thought in Greece, that it continually brings into greater clearness and sharpness the antagonism between different species of the desirable, different elements included in the comprehensive denotation of 'good.' When the effort to make conduct rational was initiated, in the latter half of the fifth century B.C., by those remarkable public lecturers commonly known as the Sophists, this antagonism either was not seen or was treated as a mere illusion of the vulgar.....And though Plato felt the conflict between Virtue and Pleasure far more intensely, so that in one phase of his mental development he repudiated the latter as an object of rational pursuit: still his general tendency is to regard the two as inseparable.....

§ 2. .....

The general admission therefore that things which are called 'good' are productive of pleasure, and that the former quality is inseparable in thought from the latter, cannot justify us in interpreting the common estimates of the goodness of conduct as estimates of the amount of pleasure resulting from it. For (1) the attribution of goodness, in the case of conduct as of most other things, may correspond not generally to all the pleasure that is caused by the conduct, but to a specific pleasure, in this case the contemplative satisfaction which the conduct causes to a disinterested spectator: and (2) it may not excite even this specific pleasure generally in proportion to its goodness.....

§ 3. It seems, then, that if the scale in which actions (or other things) are arranged in respect of goodness or badness is not finally determined by direct intuition, the proper method of determining it has yet to be ascertained. But the preceding discussion leads us to notice a possible ambiguity in the judg-

ment that this or that kind of conduct is 'best.' For if conduct has a specific goodness which we discern by means of a special taste or emotional susceptibility—such as the term 'moral sense' seems to denote—we may judge one action to be 'better' than another, meaning that it has more of this specific goodness; without intending to decide that any additional degree of this goodness is always to be preferred to all other goods. And thus it may seem that conduct morally preferable, or preferable considered merely as conduct, may be judged different from that which reflection shews to be on the whole reasonable. I think, however, that as soon as this discrepancy is pointed out, we should refuse to acquiesce in it; and should avoid it by regarding the special emotional susceptibility to which the first, intuitive, preference is due as not properly 'moral' but rather 'æsthetic.' For, as was before said, an action approved by a strictly moral sentiment must be one that we think right; but we may derive a greater amount of pleasurable emotion from contemplating an action which we think on the whole wrong.

It thus becomes necessary to distinguish between the ideas of *Goodness* and *Beauty* as applied to actions: ..... we cannot identify the sense of beauty in conduct with the moral sense strictly so called: the most beautiful conduct is not absolutely the best, but only *ceteris paribus*.

When this distinction is taken, it will be easily admitted that though wrong conduct may be judged to have a certain kind of goodness, right conduct must always be 'best,' though not perhaps most beautiful. Or, more strictly, that it must be the 'best in our power:' for here we come to the second important difference that arises from attributing 'goodness' to conduct rather than 'rightness.' We never judge conduct to be 'right' unless we think that it is in our power to do it if we choose. But this is not necessarily the case with 'goodness': there are many excellences of behaviour which we cannot attain by any effort of will, at least directly and at the moment: hence we often feel that the recognition of goodness in conduct does not carry with it a clear and definite precept to do likewise, but rather

> the vague desire
> That stirs an imitative will.

In so far as this is the case, Goodness of conduct becomes an ulterior end, the attainment of which lies outside and beyond the range of immediate volition.

§ 4. In considering Goodness of Conduct, we have been led to discuss the extension of the same notion to other things, the value of which, if they are regarded as intrinsically desirable, must be somehow coordinated and compared with that of good conduct. It cannot be denied that there are many things *primâ facie* so regarded: indeed to many minds it seems natural to apply the notion of Ultimate Good to certain comparatively permanent results, material or otherwise; rather than to virtuous actions or pleasant feelings. It will be well therefore to examine this view carefully, before we proceed to the detailed discussion of Hedonism or Intuitionism. We may divide such permanent results as are commonly judged to be good, into (1) Qualities of human beings, mental or bodily, and (2) all other good objects. Among these latter we may first notice the material things external to our bodies to which the notion is ordinarily applied, as 'good' wines, horses, &c.... (On p. 101.) For practical purposes, we require to conceive some parts of the universe as at least less good than they might be.....knowledge is a good which cannot exist except in minds: and yet one may be more interested in the development of knowledge than in its possession by any particular minds.....

(On p. 101—2.) Still, as soon as this view is clearly stated, it will, I think, be generally rejected. It will be admitted that all objects of this kind, as well as all external material things, are only reasonably to be sought in so far as they conduce either to the Happiness (which we do not at present consider) or to the Perfection or Excellence of human existence.....

But now another question arises: whether, namely, there are any qualities of man considered as a permanent entity,—in contradistinction to the series of transient psychical states that make up his conscious life,—which we can really regard as ultimately good. Here I do not wish to enter into any abstruse discussion as to the relation of Phenomenal to Noumenal existence. I am content to take the common-sense view, according to which the human body is conceived as a comparatively permanent thing, capable of certain equally permanent

excellences, such as beauty, symmetry, &c.; while minds, again, are believed to be equally or perhaps far more enduring, and even destined to endless existence. When, however, we reflect upon our conception of any particular mind, separating it in thought from the particular state of consciousness in which it momentarily exists, we find that all that is definite in it—all indeed that it contains, except the bare notion of permanent identity—represents merely a complex of tendencies, *i.e.* Faculties, Habits, Dispositions, and so forth. Now whether these terms denote any present actual existence is a metaphysical question which we need not discuss: since it seems clear that what they denote can have no value for us, except as representing future actions and feelings.....

Thus we are led to the conclusion that the only Good (beside Pleasure) that can claim to be so intrinsically, and at the same time capable of furnishing a standard of conduct, is Perfection or Excellence of Conscious Life. How far this notion includes more than Virtue, what its precise relation to Pleasure is, and to what method we shall be logically led if we accept it as fundamental, are questions which we shall more conveniently discuss after the detailed examination of these two other notions, in which we shall be engaged in the two following Books.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER I.

THE PRINCIPLE AND METHOD OF EGOISM.

§ 1.....(On p. 107) the most famous English moralist of the Intuitional school seems to grant "that our ideas of happiness and misery are of all our ideas the nearest and most important to us...[1]."

(On p. 109.) In order, therefore, to fit these terms for the purposes of scientific discussion, we must, while retaining the main part of their signification, endeavour to make it more precise. By Egoism, therefore, we must explain that we mean Egoistic Hedonism, a system that fixes as the reasonable ultimate end of each individual's action his own greatest possible Happiness: and by 'greatest Happiness,' again, we must definitely understand the greatest possible sum of pleasures; or more strictly, as pains have to be balanced against pleasures, the greatest possible surplus of pleasure over pain..... This... is the type to which the practical reasoning that is commonly called 'Egoistic' tends to conform, when we rigorously exclude all ambiguities and inconsistencies: and it is only in this more precise form that it seems worth while to subject such reasoning to a detailed examination.....

[1] Butler, Serm. XI.

CHAPTER II.

EMPIRICAL HEDONISM.

§ 1. .....we are forced to assume all pleasures and pains to have quantitative relations to each other:.....so that they can all be arranged in a certain scale as greater or less in some finite degree. From this it follows that (to use Bentham's terms) the Intensity of a pleasure can be balanced against its Duration: for if one pleasure, finite in duration, be intensively greater than another in some finite degree, the latter may be increased extensively until it just balances the former in amount.

If pleasures, then, can be arranged in a scale, as more or less pleasant, so that each is conceived to have, as pleasure, a certain positive quantity; we are led to the assumption of a hedonistic zero.....

§ 2.....

How shall we define pleasure? It seems obvious to define it as the kind of feeling which pleases us, which we like or (if comparison be supposed) prefer. Or, perhaps, if we consider it in relation to the action of which it is the end and stimulus, we may say that it is the kind of feeling which prompts us to actions tending to produce or sustain it: to sustain it, if actually present; and to produce it, if only represented in idea. If, however, we define pleasure thus, when we compare pleasures and consider which is the greatest, we shall have to say that pleasures are greater and less exactly in proportion as they exercise more or less influence in stimulating the will to action. And this seems to be the common opinion; but some psychologists hold that the intellectual valuation of the pleasantness

of pleasures (even when actually felt) is liable to be out of proportion to the volitional stimulus which they exert. Mr Bain, for example, characterizes different kinds of feeling as more and less "volitional" or "antivolitional:" by which he seems to mean that with an equal intensity as pleasures (or pains) they yet stimulate action some in a greater, some in a less, degree; and this is the conclusion to which my own observation would lead, though the point is one which I find difficult to determine. In any case, the intensity of any pleasure and the intensity of its volitional stimulus seem, as introspectively cognized, to be two different facts: so that on the whole, it seems best to define pleasure, not as the kind of feeling which we actually desire and aim at, but as that which, when we experience it, we apprehend as desirable or preferable.

But here another difficulty occurs. It has been already stated, as an assumption of Hedonism, that it is reasonable to prefer pleasures in proportion to their intensity, and not to allow this ground of preference to be outweighed by any merely qualitative difference. If of two pleasures the one that is morally or æsthetically better, 'higher' or more 'refined,' is at the same time less pleasant, the Hedonist must consider it unreasonable to prefer it. This statement implies that the non-hedonistic preference (on grounds of quality as opposed to quantity) is possible: and indeed it is commonly thought to be of frequent occurrence. But if we take the definition of pleasure just given—that it is the feeling which we judge to be preferable—it seems to be a contradiction in terms to say that the less pleasant feeling can ever be judged preferable to the more pleasant.

Perhaps it would be admitted that in deciding on the preferableness of a pleasant feeling, considered merely as feeling, the judgment of the individual who feels it at the time of feeling it must be taken as final. Others may know (on general grounds) that by preferring this gratification to some other which he might hereafter enjoy he will obtain less happiness on the whole, and so far may rightly pronounce his choice mistaken; but it is hard to see how any one can controvert his preference as far as the present feeling alone is concerned. When, however, we judge of the preferable quality (as 'elevation' or

'refinement') of a state of consciousness as distinct from its pleasantness[1], we seem to take a point of view from which the judgment of the sentient individual is no longer finally valid; we appeal to some objective standard which others can apply as well as he. Hence I should conclude that when one kind of consciousness is judged to be qualitatively superior to another, although less pleasant, it is not the feeling itself that is preferred, but something in the circumstances under which it arises, in the active or passive relations of the sentient individual to other persons or things or permanent objects of thought. For certainly if we in thought distinguish any feeling from all its objective circumstances and conditions (and also from all its effects on the subsequent feelings of the same individual or of others) and contemplate it merely as the transient feeling of a single subject; it seems impossible to find in it any other preferable quality than that which we call its pleasantness, as to which the judgment of the sentient individual must be taken as finally valid[2].

This at any rate is the preference that Hedonism regards as ultimately rational, viz. the preference of feeling considered merely as such, without any regard to the objective relations under which it arises. And the fundamental assumption of

[1] It was before observed that by saying that one pleasure is superior in *quality* to another we may mean that it is preferable when considered merely as pleasant: in which case difference in kind resolves itself into difference in degree.

[2] It is sometimes said (as *e.g.* by Mr Green, Introd. to Vol. II. of Hume's *Treatise on Human Nature*) that "pleasure as feeling, in distinction from its conditions which are not feelings, cannot be conceived." This is true, in a certain sense of the word 'conceive'; but not in any sense which would prevent us from taking Pleasure as an end of rational action. To adopt an old comparison, it is neither more nor less true than the statement that an angle cannot be 'conceived' apart from its sides. We certainly cannot form the notion of an angle without the notion of sides containing it; but this does not prevent us from apprehending with perfect definiteness the magnitude of any angle as greater or less than that of any other, without any comparison of the pairs of containing sides. Similarly, we cannot form a notion of any pleasure existing apart from some "conditions which are not feelings;" but this does not prevent us from comparing a pleasure felt under any given conditions with any other, however otherwise conditional, and pronouncing it equal or unequal: and we require no more than this to enable us to take 'amount of pleasure' as our standard in deciding between alternatives of conduct.

Hedonism, clearly stated, is that all feelings considered merely as feelings can be arranged in a certain scale of desirability, so that the desirability or pleasantness of each bears a definite ratio to that of all the others.

The empirical method of Hedonism, however, assumes somewhat more than this. It assumes that this scale and these ratios are empirically cognizable; that they are given in our experience of pleasure and pain. This assumption, no doubt, follows naturally from the former: since feeling cannot be conceived to exist otherwise than as it is felt—its manner of existence is its being felt—and therefore no state of consciousness can be thought to be more or less pleasant or painful than we in feeling it perceive it to be. At the same time, as we shall presently see, both assumptions require careful consideration.....

CHAPTER III.

EMPIRICAL HEDONISM CONTINUED.

(On p. 126.) If so, may it not be said that this supposed scale of pleasures (which at first sight seemed so clear and familiar a notion that it would be extreme scepticism to doubt its validity) turns out to be strictly incognizable? We must admit at any rate, that the conviction that our pleasures and pains have each a real definite degree, however deeply rooted in our minds, is a belief that cannot be verified by experience; and therefore that scientific Hedonism does not rest on a strictly empirical basis.

(Conclusion of Ch. III.) But the argument drawn from the indefiniteness and uncertainty of hedonistic calculation cannot be denied to have great weight. I am far from implying that it should lead us to reject altogether the method of estimating pleasure and pains by empirical-reflective comparison: I am perfectly conscious that, in spite of all the difficulties that I have urged, I daily perform a number of such comparisons with complete practical reliance on their results. But I think that we must at least admit the desirability of confirming or correcting the results of such comparisons by any other method upon which we may find reason to rely.

NOTE.—The discussion in this chapter will probably appear to most readers to be of a sufficiently sceptical and destructive character. I have however carefully avoided the exaggerations into which anti-hedonistic writers occasionally rush; and which tend, I think, to make practical persons regard all criticism of this kind as idle and captious. For instance, it seems to me a manifest extravagance to say that "not knowing how long it may be physically possible for a man to live, or how many pleasures it may be possible for him to get into a given

time, we are not able to conjecture what the number of pleasures which nature allows him may be, nor, in consequence, whether any action detracts from that number or no:" since almost all rational action of human beings, on whatever principles it proceeds, must be determined by probabilities, many of which are far less definitely calculable than the chance of duration of life for any given man; nor does it seem to be difficult for a man to form at least a rough estimate, from experience, of the amount of pleasure of any given kind which he can obtain within a given time.

Nor, again, have I noticed Mr Green's argument (cf. Introd. to Hume, Vol. II. p. 9, and *Mind*, No. VI. p. 266—9), that "a greatest possible sum of pleasures" is "intrinsically nonsense," because "pleasant feelings are not quantities to be added." For all that is meant by this is that a sum of pleasure cannot be enjoyed *as a sum;* that is, all at once. This may possibly be an argument against the reasonableness of taking 'greatest happiness' as the ultimate end of action; we are not, however, at present concerned with this, but only with the possibility of realizing it if we do take it; and I cannot perceive that this is affected by the necessity of realizing it in successive parts.

I need hardly add that no additional difficulty is introduced by the supposition that the pleasant feelings which are to be summed will extend through an infinite length of time: for we are of course perfectly able to compare quantitatively two or more infinite series of finite quantities, so far as we know the quantitative relations of the corresponding terms in the different series. If (as is probably the case in most hedonistic calculations) we have no knowledge of these relations beyond a certain point of time, the 'infinity' of the series cannot affect our calculations at all. We can only take into our reckoning what we can foresee: the fact, that beyond the limits of our foresight there are unknown elements which would be of importance to us if we knew them, cannot affect the reasonableness of our calculation as applied to the elements which we can know.

CHAPTER IV.

HEDONISM AND COMMON SENSE.

(On p. 136) ... and perhaps most of us would be rather puzzled if we were suddenly deprived of the guidance of common sense in our pursuit of happiness...

§ 3.....

And as for the quasi-philosophical paradoxes as to the illusoriness of sensual enjoyments, wealth, power, fame, &c., we may explain the general acceptance which these find by admitting a certain amount of inevitable exaggeration in the common estimates of such objects of desire, which from time to time causes a reaction and an equally excessive temporary depreciation of them. For as we saw (ch. 3) it is natural for men to value too highly the absent pleasures for which they hope and long. Power and Fame, for example, are certainly attended with anxieties and disgusts which are not foreseen when they are represented in longing imagination: yet there seems no reason to doubt that they bring to most men a clear balance of happiness on the whole. It seems clear, again, that luxury adds *less* to the ordinary enjoyment of life than most men struggling with penury suppose: there are special delights attending the hard-earned meal, and the eagerly expected amusement, which must be weighed against the profuser pleasures that the rich can command: so that we may fairly conclude that increase of happiness is very far from keeping pace with increase of wealth. Though, on the other hand, when we take into account all the pleasures of Culture, Power, Fame, and Beneficence, and still more the security that wealth gives against the pains of privation and the anxieties of penury, we can hardly doubt that increase of wealth brings on the

average *some* increase of happiness. So that it would be extravagant optimism to affirm that happiness is "equally distributed through all ranks and callings," while yet we may reasonably conclude that it is *more* equally distributed than the aspect of men's external circumstances would lead us to infer: especially if the pleasures that attend the exercise of the affections are to most persons really the most important of all...

CHAPTER V.

HAPPINESS AND DUTY.

§ 1. AMONG the current opinions as to the sources of happiness, there is one of such peculiar and supreme importance that it seemed best to reserve it for a special and separate examination: the belief, namely, that happiness is best attained by the performance of what is commonly recognized as Duty. We certainly find a general expression to this effect in most communities of men, at least after a certain stage in civilisation has been reached.....

§ 2. Accepting, then, the common division of duties into self-regarding and social, it may be conceded that as far as the first are concerned the view that we are examining is not likely to provoke any controversy.....

§ 4. (On p. 155.) In considering the force of these [internal] sanctions, we have first to distinguish and eliminate those pleasures and pains which lie in the anticipation of rewards and punishments in a future life: for as we are now supposing the calculations of Rational Egoism to be performed without taking into account any feelings that are beyond the range of experience, it will be more consistent to exclude also the pleasurable or painful anticipations of such feelings...

...(On p. 156.) To constitute such conduct reasonable for the egoist, we have to.....

(On pp. 158, 159.) Before, however, we proceed further, a fundamental difficulty must be removed which has probably some time since suggested itself to the reader. If a man thinks it reasonable to seek his own interest, it is clear that he cannot himself disapprove of any conduct that comes under this principle or approve of the opposite. And hence it may appear that

the pleasures and pains of conscience cannot enter into the calculation whether a certain course of conduct is or is not in accordance with Rational Egoism, because they cannot attach themselves in the egoist's mind to any modes of action, which have not been already decided, on other grounds, to be reasonable or the reverse. And this is to a certain extent true; but we must here recur to the distinction (indicated in Book I. ch. 3) between the general impulse to do what we believe to be reasonable, and special sentiments of liking or aversion for special kinds of conduct, independent of their reasonableness. In the moral sentiments as they exist in ordinary men, these two kinds of feeling are indistinguishably blended: because it is commonly believed that the rules of conduct to which the common moral sentiments are attached are in some way or other reasonable. We can however conceive the two separated: and in fact, as was before said, we have experience of such separation whenever a man is led by a process of thought to adopt a different view of morality from that in which he has been trained: for in such a case there will always remain in his mind some quasi-moral likings and aversions, no longer sustained by his deliberate judgment of right and wrong. And thus there is every reason to believe that most men, however firmly they might adopt the principles of Egoistic Hedonism, would still feel sentiments prompting to the performance of social duty, as commonly recognized in their society, independently of any conclusion that the actions prompted by such sentiments were reasonable and right. For such sentiments would always be powerfully supported by the sympathy of others, and their expressions of praise and blame, liking and aversion: and since it is agreed that the conduct commonly recognized as virtuous is *generally* coincident with that which enlightened self-love would dictate, a rational egoist's habits of conduct will be such as naturally to foster these 'quasi-moral' feelings.....

CHAPTER VI.

OTHER FORMS OF THE EGOISTIC METHOD.

§ 1.....I have also referred indirectly to the assumption apparently made by Aristotle (and also by Plato in some passages), that the kind of feeling which is most pleasant or preferable as feeling, will always accompany the kind of activity which we approve, or which we rank highest in some scale of excellence, determined by an appeal to moral intuition. The extent of this assumption seems to have been concealed from the ancient thinkers by the ambiguity of such terms as 'good,' 'well', which blend the general notion of 'desirability' with the notion of moral excellence: but when once the ambiguity is clearly seen, the assumption cannot be admitted as valid. The proposition, that conformity to moral rules, intuitions or instincts, is the course of action which tends to produce the agent's own greatest happiness, must be referred to the test of experience: and this, as we have seen, does not support it in its full extent. It remains to consider whether there is any other psychical or physical phenomenon, so universally connected with and proportional to Pleasure or Pain, that we can use it as a trustworthy guide to the attainment of Maximum Happiness.

§ 2. The only psychical phenomenon that presents itself as possibly possessing these characteristics is Desire or Inclination. There is no doubt that this kind of feeling is closely connected with Pleasure (and aversion similarly with pain): as I fully admitted in a preceding chapter (I. c. 4), in which I attempted to shew that the object of desire is not always pleasure. In fact pleasure, as we have seen (II. c. 2, § 2), is a state which normally (if not universally) produces desire for itself in proportion to its intensity; and pain similarly produces aversion.

And according to the received laws of psychical change (which experience continually confirms) the causes of pleasure come to be directly desired and the causes of pain shunned. While, further, according to the current theory of heredity, the desires and aversions thus generated tend to be inherited, and thus ultimately appear as what we call instinctive impulses, prompting, more or less unconsciously, to acts and objects productive of pleasure or preservative against pain. In this way we can understand how, by gradual 'adaptation of the organism to its environment' through 'registration of experiences' of pleasure and pain, the instinctive preferences of each individual might come to be more trustworthy guides to his happiness than hedonistic calculations. The belief that this is the case, leads us to a new method of Egoistic Hedonism; involving a remarkable inversion of that 'supremacy of Reason over inclination' which Moral Philosophy at its outset so emphatically proclaimed. That this reaction against the rule of the Calculative element of the Soul is to some extent justifiable I would not deny. It has been, I think, an error common to the majority of philosophers in all ages to despise or neglect too much the leadings of natural instinct. No doubt the consciousness of a strong 'instinctive' impulse ought always to be counted as an important element in deciding what course of conduct is likely to promote our happiness. And in estimating its importance we have not only to consider the pleasure to be gained by satisfying it, and the pain of ungratified desire; but also the *general* adaptation of our impulsive or appetitive nature to the circumstances of our life, and the consequent probability that the impulse is prompting us to an act which will be productive of happiness in other ways than by its own gratification. If our prudential comparison, apart from this latter consideration, gives an uncertain result, this may reasonably turn the scale in favour of the impulse.

To claim more authority than this for non-rational impulse or desire would I think be unwarrantable. For it is one thing to admit generally that every sentient organism tends to adapt itself to its environment, in such a manner as to acquire instincts of some value in guiding it to pleasure and away from pain: it is quite another thing to affirm that in the human

organism one particular kind of adaptation, that which proceeds by unconscious modification of instinct, is to be preferred to that other kind of adaptation which is brought about by conscious comparison and inference. It is clear, that this proposition can only be justified by a comparison of the consequences of yielding to instinctive impulses with the consequences of controlling them by calculations of resulting pleasure and pain: that is, by the very method of which the comparative untrustworthiness is sought to be proved. We require then, at least, a very wide induction from those clear and simple cases in which the intellect is allowed to be capable of deciding between the amounts of happiness consequent respectively on two alternatives of conduct. But no one will maintain that in the majority of clear instances where non-rational impulse conflicts with rational forecast, a subsequent calculation of consequences appears to justify the former; the assertion would be in too flagrant conflict with the Common Sense and common experience of mankind. Nor is it relevant to urge that, in other animals, the organism is continually adapted to its environment through the unconscious modification of Instinct by experience. For the extent of the analogy between such animals and man is just the point at issue. It may fairly be maintained on the other side that even in brutes, requiring as they do a far less complex adaptation to circumstances, the results of the unconscious process are imperfect: that conscious comparison and prudential forecast may be regarded as the natural substitute for and development of this unconscious adaptation in the more highly organized brain of man, related to far more complicated conditions of existence: that these comparisons and forecasts, again, become in their final form and most complete development the calculations of systematic hedonism which we have been examining: and that in proportion as Reason is developed the instincts that remain naturally sink into a subordinate place, and become more and more feeble and fallible guides. Indeed in many cases a man who took the resolution to rely on Instinct would simply surrender his will to a complicated conflict of wavering and alternating impulses, leading to the most ineffective fitfulness and fluctuation in external conduct. Experience, carefully examined, may perhaps lead us to the

conclusion that there are certain special departments of life in which instinct is on the whole a safer guide than prudential calculation. The intrusion of Prudence into these regions appears therefore to be suicidal: and we are led by a different road to the conclusion previously stated, that Rational Egoism is naturally and necessarily self-limiting. Still, this would not in itself involve the substitution of any other method for that of Empirical Hedonism: as we have found so far no satisfactory mode of determining the limits to which prudential calculation may prudently be carried, except by this very calculation itself[1].

§ 3. Perhaps, however, if we take a more definitely physiological view of the conditions of Pleasure and Pain, we may find some universal physical accompaniments of these feelings, so easily recognizable as to afford us that clearer guidance to happiness of which we are in search. And a theory of the kind that we want seems to be given us in the doctrine of Hobbes to which I have already referred, that "pleasure helpeth, and pain hindereth vital actions;" or, as Prof. Bain states it, with more accurate expression of the general relation of psychical to physical fact, that "pleasure is connected with an increase and pain with an abatement of vital functions." When, however, we come to examine this latter phrase we find a rather important ambiguity in it. It would most naturally mean that pleasure is the psychical correlate of an increase in the movements of nerve-matter that cause or constitute the physical action of any organ. But in this sense the theory seems contrary to experience: for we are all familiar with the fact that an unusual intensification of the action of many organs causes pain in some degree: such, for example, as results from the straining of the muscles of the arm in lifting great weights, or of the organ of hearing by very loud sounds. Nor can it be maintained that in these cases, though the action of the special organs is intensified, that of the organism as a whole

[1] I have not found it necessary to strengthen my argument by reference to the considerations leading to the belief that the 'adaptation of organism to environment' in a social animal results normally in instincts tending to ends different from its own pleasure, and perhaps forcibly conflicting with this. This point of view will be developed later.

is diminished: on the contrary, the excessive action that causes discomfort generally spreads to some extent beyond the organ primarily strained, and rouses the system as a whole to more than usual activity. If, however, it be meant that the physical movements of which pleasure is the concomitant are always such as tend *ultimately* to increase the activity of some special organ or of the organism taken as a whole, the doctrine comes into still more palpable conflict with familiar facts. Indeed the commonly recognised need of prudential guidance is due in a great measure to our experience of the effects in ultimately weakening and impairing the functions of important organs, due to exercises, at the time most agreeable, of the same or other organs. For example, gambling or novel-reading at night is often a highly pleasurable exercise of the brain, while at the same time it leaves it weaker next morning; and similarly alcoholic stimulation may enable the stomach to digest comfortably excessive meals, to the subsequent enfeebling both of that organ itself and of the whole system.

It may however be replied that, though the pursuit of Pleasure does not always lead to 'increase of vital functions' on the whole, it may still be true that if we make the latter our immediate aim, we shall get the greatest amount of pleasure on the whole that our constitution admits. On this view we should get a method of determining conduct that seems the physiological counterpart of one before noticed, which aims at Self-development[1], not as an ultimate end but as a means to happiness. It does not however appear on examination that the physiological view, taken by itself, can give us much definite guidance. For though I doubt not that the exercise of our intellectual faculties and emotional capacities, on which the most important part of human happiness depends, has always a physical correlate or counterpart which sometime or other we may perhaps come to know: still all attempts to establish a definite connexion between such faculties or capacities and particular portions of the human nervous system have as yet failed. Hence from physical observation and inference alone we can gain very little information as to the extent or manner in which our most important functions are being performed:

[1] Cf. Bk. I., c. 7, § 2.

and it will be admitted that the fullest exercise of our bodily organs, including the brain and nerves, in so far as the action of these can be physically estimated, will not by itself secure us a high degree of human happiness.

In order therefore to make the notion of Self-development practically available, it seems necessary to regard 'self' from a psychical point of view, as possessing a complex of mental faculties and capacities, for the completest possible exercise of which we have to provide. But what these are cannot be ascertained by introspection. Indeed, as regards many of them, the notion of *acquisition* seems really more appropriate than that of development: because the permanent possibilities of action, and even of passive feeling, which constitute my notion of my present self or mind, in so far as it is something definitely charactered and cognizable as like or unlike other minds, appear to be greatly due to my own previous actions and feelings, and are still capable of being modified by my own efforts and the influence of external circumstances..... The 'self' of each (meaning by the term his particular character and intellect) is never so completely determinate, as not to admit of being 'developed' further in a number of different ways; though no doubt these are confined within limits that, as life advances, are drawn continually closer.

(On p. 173.) ..... Experience certainly seems to support the view that men lose happiness by allowing some of their faculties or capacities to be withered and dwarfed for want of exercise, and thus not leaving themselves sufficient variety of feelings or activities. Indeed, as regards the bodily organs, which we began by considering, it will be agreed that the due exercise of most, if not all, is indispensable to the health of the organism; and further, that health is a more important source of the individual's happiness than the unsalutary exercise of any one organ can be; both from the absence of organic pain which it secures, and the positive though indefinite pleasure by which corporeal wellbeing is continually represented in consciousness. Still, it would appear that the harmony of functions necessary to health is a very elastic one...

BOOK III.

CHAPTER I.

INTUITIONISM.

§ 1. In the effort to examine, closely but quite neutrally, the system of Egoistic Hedonism, with which we have been engaged in the last book, one effect that will probably have been produced on the reader's mind is a strong aversion to the principle and method examined. Certainly such an aversion is very commonly announced as the result of contemplating Egoism: I believe that is felt by many even of those who (like myself) find it impossible not to admit the 'authority' of self-love, or the 'rationality' of seeking one's own individual happiness[1].

...(On p. 179.) The case of motives is different: these are known to us directly by introspection: and as an action externally the same may be done from most diverse motives, it is important to decide whether we regard the action or the motive as the proper object of moral intuition. Let us first get the question quite clear. Under the notion of 'action,' as morally judged, we consider not the muscular movements immediately caused by the agent's volition, but rather the effects of these; not however always

[1] I do not give this as a reason for rejecting the principle of Egoism, the rationality of which (as I have said on the preceding page) I find it impossible not to admit. But this feeling of aversion is a psychological fact worthy of notice, and the notice of it affords a convenient transition from Egoism to Intuitionism.

their actual effects, for those may be other than the agent designed, in which case they cannot be included in the conception of strictly voluntary action; but the effects which he foresaw in the moment of volition. It is this group of foreseen effects, conceived as chosen from among others equally in the agent's power, that we call his 'intention': and we shall agree, I think, that it is to this rather than to the outward act that moral approval or condemnation properly belongs. For though it is true that we hold a man legally responsible for unintended bad consequences of his acts or forbearances, when they are such as he, with average care, might have foreseen; still, we admit on reflection that moral guilt only attaches to them indirectly, in so far as this carelessness is the result of some previous wilful neglect of duty. And since by 'motives' we mean these same foreseen consequences in so far as they are also desired by the agent, it is easy to confound 'motive' and 'intention': and it would seem that this confusion is often made by those who say that the moral quality of an act depends upon its 'motive.' For when the distinction between the terms is clearly taken, it will be admitted that we are morally responsible in an equal degree for all the foreseen consequences of our acts, in so far as they were foreseen with equal definiteness and certainty, although we rarely desire more than a part of them.

On the other hand, the same act is no doubt often judged to be better or worse, according as in doing it we desired one part or another of the foreseen consequences: in some cases, indeed, a particular state of desire is included in the common notion of the action prescribed, and may even be the most important element. I think therefore that both Intention and Motive must be admitted as the subject of moral intuition, if we follow common sense: but that the judgment on intentions is, in the view of most men, primary and paramount. It is a commonplace to say that we must not do a bad action from a good motive: and generally speaking, it seems more natural to most men to judge of an action in its external aspect—presuming it to be intended unless there is positive evidence to the contrary—without attempting to penetrate to its motives. Indeed we do not take notice of our own motives except in

the introspective attitude of mind, which is habitual only in a small minority.....

§ 3. There is, however, one motive, of such special importance in Ethics, that it may be well to consider it separately: the impulse, namely, to do what is right, simply because it is right or good, in itself or as a means to some end conceived as ultimately good. In the Stoic system, and in the teaching of later schools which have much affinity with Stoicism, it has been held that action could not be strictly speaking right, unless done from this motive. To express this view, the term 'formal' as contrasted with 'material' rightness has been used: an action being called 'materially' right, if the agent in willing intended the right effects; 'formally' right, if he was moved by pure desire to fulfil duty, or (as others would say) chose duty for its own sake. There have been those who recognised no kind of rightness but the latter; but this view is extremely paradoxical, as in most minds the very existence of the desire or choice of doing right as such is inseparable from the belief that there is something right besides the mere desire or choice itself. 'Material' rightness, in fact, is what we commonly desire to determine on some principles or other when we ask what our duty is (a question which generally supposes a desire to do duty, if we only knew what it was); and it is clear that the doctrine of the paramount importance of the dutiful impulse does not point to any special principles for determining particular duties: we have still to arrive at these by some other road.

We must observe further, that the term 'formal rightness' may be differently used, as implying not a *desire* or choice of the action as right, but merely a *belief* that it is so. In this sense it is equivalent to what was before called 'subjective rightness.' Now it is obvious that I cannot perform an action from pure love of duty without believing it to be right: but I can believe it to be right and yet do it from some other motive..... Meanwhile it will no doubt be commonly admitted that no act can be absolutely right, whatever its external aspect and relations, which is 'subjectively' wrong. ...But however this may be, it is clearly with 'objective' or 'material' rightness that ethical discussion is mainly concerned.

There is, however, one practical rule of some value, to be

obtained by merely reflecting on our general notion of 'objective rightness,' before we proceed to discuss more special principles for determining it in any particular case. In a previous chapter[1] I endeavoured to make this notion clearer by saying that 'what is objectively right must be judged to be so by all rational beings who judge truly of the matter.' This statement does not imply that what is judged to be right for one man must necessarily be judged so for another: 'objective' duty may vary from *A* to *B* no less than the 'objective' facts of their nature and circumstances vary. There seems, however, to be this difference between our conceptions of ethical and physical objectivity respectively. In the variety of coexistent physical facts we find an accidental or arbitrary element in which we have to acquiesce, as we cannot conceive it to be excluded by any extension of our knowledge of physical causation. If we ask, for example, why any portion of space empirically known to us contains more matter than any similar adjacent portion, physical science can only answer by stating (along with certain laws of change) some antecedent position of the parts of matter which needs explanation no less than the present; and however far back we carry our ascertainment of such antecedent positions, the one with which we leave off seems as arbitrary as that with which we started. But within the range of our cognitions of right and wrong, it will be generally agreed that we cannot admit a similar unexplained variation. We cannot judge an action to be right for *A* and wrong for *B*, unless we can find in the natures or circumstances of the two some difference which we see to be a reasonable ground for difference in their duties. If therefore I judge any action to be right for myself, I implicitly judge it to be right for any other person whose nature and circumstances do not differ from my own in some important respects. Now by making this latter judgment explicit, we may protect ourselves against the danger which besets the conscience, of being warped and perverted by strong desire, so that we too easily think that we ought to do what we very much wish to do. For if we ask ourselves whether we believe that any similar person in similar circumstances ought to perform the

[1] Cf. Bk. I. c. 3, § 2.

contemplated action, the question will often disperse the false appearance of objective rightness which our strong inclination has given to it. We see that we should not think it right for another, and therefore that it cannot be right for us. Indeed this subjective test of the rightness of our volitions is so generally effective, that Kant seems to have regarded it as supplying a complete criterion of Duty. But this is an error analogous to that of supposing that Formal Logic supplies a complete criterion of truth. A volition which stands this test may after all be wrong, though a volition which does not stand it cannot be right. It is no doubt an undeniably sound precept that one should always "act on a maxim that one can will to be law universal." But all or most conscientious persons, as we have seen, implicitly conform to this precept: while at the same time we continually find such persons in thoroughly conscientious disagreement as to what each and the others ought to do, and in fact prepared to lay down a number of conflicting maxims, all equally possessing the potential universality which Kant requires. Under these circumstances, we cannot say that all such persons act rightly by acting on the potentially universal maxims; unless we identify subjective and objective rightness and affirm that whatever any one thinks right is so. But this ethical Protagoreanism is in flagrant conflict with common sense; and would obviously render the construction of a scientific code of morality futile: as the very object of such a code is to supply a standard for rectifying man's divergent opinions.

§ 4. We may conclude then that the cognitions which the present method attempts to systematize, are primarily direct intuitions of the moral qualities of particular kinds of actions, regarded for the most part in their external relations.

But here arises the question, Have we any such intuitions? For we ought not perhaps to take for granted the actuality of the Intuitional method, even as much as we did that of Hedonism in the preceding book. There is no doubt that men sometimes compare different pleasures, and pronounce one greater or less that another: but it has been doubted whether we ever by contemplating actions discern them to be right, and regard this perception as a paramount reason for doing

them. Or perhaps few would explicitly deny the proposition as just stated: but it is more common to maintain that this 'perception of rightness' is really a perception of conduciveness to pleasure. Here, if the agent's own pleasure be meant, the assertion is in conflict with experience: for most of us never seem to apprehend the existence of a moral rule more strongly than in cases where this apprehension is divorced from any expectation of consequent pleasure to ourselves.

It may however be answered, that though this is true as regards what we expect in this world, it does not apply to extra-mundane consequences; and that by a 'moral rule' we really mean a law of God, which we are impelled to obey from fear or hope of what God may do to us in the future. And no doubt in a Christian society, where there is a well-established belief that God will reward virtue and punish vice, it is difficult to prove that right actions are not done from hope of reward or fear of punishment. Still, there seems good ground for concluding that this is not always or perhaps even generally the case. For we find these moral beliefs operative in persons in whom religious convictions are dim and feeble, or even non-existent: and again, the most religious persons very commonly hold that right actions ought to be done because they are right, and not from self-regarding desire or fear: and introspection seems to shew that they are frequently so done, and that the more clearly because there is a peculiar pleasurable emotion, sometimes called 'the natural reward of virtue,' which attends such acts when done from pure regard for duty, but not otherwise.

But however this point may be decided, it is important to point out that it does not necessarily affect our present investigation. For since we conceive God as Supreme Reason, His laws must be essentially reasonable rules; and if these are known by intuition, it does not alter the method of determining right conduct that we have a supplementary belief that God will reward their observance and punish their violation, even if it be thought that this latter belief is our only reasonable ground for obeying them. As an illustration of this we may refer to Locke's view of morality.....

Others again hold that the 'perception of rightness' in an

action is really a perception of its conduciveness, not to the agent's happiness, but to happiness generally. And it certainly seems to me that such conduciveness is found, normally if not universally, to be an attribute of conduct perceived to be right. But.....probably the statement, that at any rate the majority of men, in the present stage of human development, have an apparently intuitive apprehension of the rightness and wrongness of actions, would hardly have been denied; if there had not been some confusion between the psychological question of the *existence* of such apparent intuitions, what we may call the 'psychogonical' question of their *origin*, and the ethical question of their *validity*.

All three points, Existence, Origin, and Validity, should be discussed quite independently. The first question, it would seem, can only be determined by introspection, together with observation of the present phenomena of other minds, as made known to us by means of language and other signs. The second question must obviously be investigated by quite different methods, and it is not easy to see how this investigation can affect the former question, which ought rather to be settled before this is begun: as it seems premature to inquire into the origin of anything before we have ascertained what it is. We find, however, that the two inquiries are often so completely blended, that the term "intuitive" has actually been confounded in use with "innate," even by writers of deserved repute.....; the psychical consequent is in no respect exactly similar to its antecedents, nor can it be resolved into them: and there is nothing, at least according to the ordinary empirical view of causation, which should lead us to regard the latter as really constituting the former.

This confusion, however, between the Existence and the Origin of the psychical facts which we call moral intuitions, is chiefly due to the connexion that has been held to exist between their Origin and their Validity. For to say that an apparent cognition is untrustworthy is to say that it is not what it appears to be, does not exist *as a cognition*. And it has been very commonly assumed on the one side that if our moral faculty can be shown to be 'derived' or 'developed,' suspicion is thereby thrown upon its trustworthiness; while on the other

hand if it can be shown to be 'original,' its trustworthiness is thereby established. The two assumptions appear to me equally devoid of foundation. On the one hand, I can see no ground for supposing that a derived faculty, as such, is more liable to error than an underived one[1]. On the other hand, if we are once led to distrust our moral faculty, owing to the want of clearness and consistency in the moral judgments of each individual taken by themselves, and the discrepancies between the judgments of different individuals, I cannot see how our confidence in any exercise of it is to be reestablished by a demonstration of its 'originality.' I see no reason to believe that the 'original' element of our moral cognition can be ascertained; but if it could, I see no reason to hold that it would be especially free from error.

§ 5. How then can we hope to eliminate error from our moral intuitions? The common answer to this question was briefly suggested in a previous chapter where the different phases of the Intuitional Method were discussed. It was there said that in order to settle the doubts arising from the uncertainties and discrepancies that are found when we compare our judgments on particular cases, reflective persons naturally appeal to general rules or formulæ: and it is to such general formulæ that Intuitional Moralists commonly attribute ultimate certainty and validity. And certainly there are obvious sources of error in our judgments respecting concrete duty which seem to be absent when we consider the abstract notions of different kinds of conduct: since in any concrete case the complexity of circumstances necessarily increases the difficulty of judging, and our personal interests or habitual sympathies are liable to

[1] It is now widely believed that all our cognitive faculties,—in short the human mind as a whole, has been derived and developed, through a gradual process of physical change, out of some lower life in which cognition, properly speaking, had no place. On this view, the distinction between 'original' and 'derived' reduces itself to that between 'prior' and 'posterior' in development: and the fact that the moral faculty appears somewhat later in the process of evolution than other faculties can hardly be regarded as an argument against the validity of moral intuition; especially since this process is commonly conceived to be homogeneous throughout. Indeed such a line of reasoning would be suicidal; as the cognition that the moral faculty is developed is certainly later in development than moral cognition, and would therefore, by this reasoning, be less trustworthy.

disturb the clearness of our moral discernment. Further, we must observe that most of us feel the need of such formulæ not only to correct, but also to supplement, our intuitions respecting concrete duties. Only exceptionally confident persons find that they always seem to see clearly what ought to be done in any case that comes before them. Most of us, however unhesitatingly we may affirm rightness and wrongness within the range of our ordinary experience, yet frequently meet with cases where our unreasoned judgment fails us; and where we could no more decide the moral issue raised without appealing to some general formulæ, than we could decide a disputed legal claim without reference to the positive law that deals with the matter.

And such formulæ are not difficult to find: it only requires a little reflection and observation of men's moral discourse to make a collection of such general rules, as to the validity of which there would be apparent agreement at least among moral persons of our own age and civilization, and which would cover with approximate completeness the whole of human conduct....

CHAPTER II.

VIRTUE AND DUTY.

§ 1..... We shall therefore keep most close to usage if we define Duties as 'those Right actions or abstinences, for the adequate accomplishment of which a moral impulse is at least occasionally necessary.' If now we consider the relation of Virtue to Duty, we shall find some little difficulty in making it clear. For, in the first place, there seem to be some virtues (such as Generosity) which may be realized in acts objectively wrong, from want of insight into their consequences: and even some (such as Courage) which may be exhibited in wrong acts that are known by the agent to be such. But it is perhaps doubtful whether in such cases we should deliberately regard the quality thus manifested as a Virtue, though it certainly excites in us a quasi-moral admiration. At any rate it will involve no material deviation from usage if we for the present confine the term 'virtuous' to Right actions. Shall we say then that the spheres of Duty and Virtue coincide? Some I think, would accept this statement without hesitation: still in its common use each term seems to include something excluded from the other..... At the same time the lines of distinction are very doubtfully drawn on either side: for we certainly call men virtuous for doing what is strictly their duty: indeed we can hardly deny that it is, in some sense, a man's strict duty to do whatever action he judges most excellent. Perhaps we may legitimately maintain at once a stricter and a laxer standard of duty; the former to be applied by each to his own conduct and the latter to the conduct of others: distinguishing between 'what a man ought to do or forbear,' and 'what other men ought to blame him for not doing or for-

bearing.' But whatever view may be taken of this distinction, I think we shall find it most convenient to employ the terms, so that the Virtuous conduct may include the performance of Duty as well as whatever good actions may be thought to go beyond Duty: and this seems to be at least sufficiently in harmony with common usage.

§ 2. Virtue, then, may be defined as a disposition to do, or habit of doing, such right voluntary actions as require a moral impulse for their adequate accomplishment.

But here there may seem to be almost a contradiction in our terms: for if we do the action merely from habit, or as the result of disposition, it would seem that we cannot help doing it, and therefore that the action is not strictly voluntary. To avoid this difficulty Kant distinguishes a habit or settled bent of will from a habit of action; and calls the latter mechanical, but considers the former consistent with Freedom of Will. I cannot, however, see how we can really apply the metaphysical notion of Freedom to an action that we conceive as the necessary result of that definite character of any person, of which 'habits' and 'dispositions' are elements. And hence I must admit that the definition above given forcibly suggests the antinomy or conflict of inevitable assumptions which we noticed in an earlier chapter, and of which I only attempted to offer a practical solution[1]. An action to be virtuous must be voluntary; that is, it must be chosen by the agent out of several alternatives conceived as equally possible: and yet virtue is an element of character, and in so far as a man's character takes effect in his actions, these seem to be determinate before volition and therefore not, strictly speaking, voluntary. Still, as was before said, we may prevent this difficulty from invading our practical reasonings by defining an act or omission to be voluntary if absence of a sufficiently strong motive was the only obstacle to non-performance or performance. It may, however, be said that there are some virtues which are not even in this sense within the reach of voluntary effort: and that is another distinction between Virtue and Duty, that we can always do our duty, but cannot always realize a particular virtue.

...(On p. 197.) At the same time the distinction, if we follow

[1] Cf. Bk. I. c. 5.

common usage, is certainly not complete. For firstly, it is widely held that Virtue, at least in the highest form, involves a choice of the virtuous action for its own sake: and it is doubtful whether this is in any man's power at any moment. For though I can resolve unconditionally to do any action which I conceive to be right, or the best in my power, and can resist any motive that conflicts with reason, and can in various ways indirectly modify the force of my non-rational impulses; still, I do not see how I can prevent a non-virtuous impulse from being actually predominant when I choose the action to which it prompts. Again, the common notions of some virtues, such as Benevolence and Courage, seem to include a certain condition of feeling, which some men certainly cannot always produce when required: while the realization of others, such as Wisdom and Caution, involves operations of the intellect which it is no less out of our power to perform adequately by mere willing at any time, even when our general notions of wise and cautious conduct are as definite as they can be made. These Virtues can no doubt be gradually acquired by cultivation; but this is also the case with the other excellences from which we desire to distinguish them. Neither the latter nor the former are altogether discharged from the idea of duty as commonly conceived. They are all equally included in the current notion of the 'duty of aiming at excellence or perfection,' under which the principle of Æsthetic Intuitionism is commonly recognised as a subordinate part of the morality of common sense (just as the principles of the two kinds of Hedonism are recognised under the notions of Prudence and Benevolence respectively). And it is to be observed that this duty of cultivation extends to all virtuous habits or dispositions in which we are found to be deficient, in so far as we can thus increase our tendency to do the corresponding acts in future; however completely such acts may on each occasion be within the control of the will. It is true that for acts of this latter kind, so far as they are perfectly deliberate, we do not seem to need any special virtuous habits; if only we have knowledge of what is right and best to be done, together with a sufficiently strong wish to do it[1].....

[1] Hence the Socratic doctrine that 'all virtue is knowledge'; on the assumption that a rational being must necessarily wish for what is good.

...(Conclusion.) We may observe, however, one general principle on which all are agreed: that virtuous performance, in so far as it is thought to extend beyond the range of strict duty and is excellent and praiseworthy rather than obligatory, must always be postponed to the fulfilment of Duty proper. And hence it is important to take note of this distinction wherever we meet with it in our examination of the particulars of Duty and Virtue; even though we may hold that the apparent difference in stringency vanishes on careful consideration, leaving only a distinction between 'prior' and 'posterior' or 'absolute' and 'relative' obligation,

CHAPTER III.

THE INTELLECTUAL VIRTUES.

§ 1. WISDOM was always placed by the Greek philosophers first in the list of virtues: in fact in the post-Aristotelian schools the notion of the Sage or ideally Wise man (*σοφὸς*) was regularly employed to exhibit in a concrete form the rules of life laid down by each system. In common Greek usage, the term just mentioned would signify excellence in purely speculative science, or even a superior degree of technical skill in any department, no less than practical wisdom: indeed Aristotle, who stood alone among the schools sprung from Socrates in distinguishing sharply 'theoretic' from 'practical' wisdom, restricts this term to the former, and uses another word (*φρόνιμος*) to denote the latter. The English term Wisdom however is chiefly used in reference to practice: and even when applied to the region of pure speculation suggests especially such intellectual gifts and habits as lead to sound practical conclusions: namely, comprehensiveness of view, the habit of attending impartially to a number of diverse considerations, difficult to estimate exactly, and skill in determining the relative importance of each. At any rate, it is only Practical Wisdom which we commonly class among Virtues, as distinguished from purely intellectual excellences. How then shall we define Practical Wisdom? Some would say that we mean by it merely the faculty of discerning the best means, in the conduct of life generally, to the attainment of any ends that the natural play of human motives may lead us to seek. But if so, it is not easy to see how it is less a

purely intellectual excellence than any species of technical skill, or faculty of selecting the best means to given ends in a certain limited and special department of human action. Such skill in the special arts is partly communicable by means of definite rules, and partly a matter of tact or instinct, depending somewhat on natural gifts and predispositions, but to a great extent acquired by exercise and imitation. So Practical Wisdom, or Skill in the Art of Life, as we might call it on this view, would involve a certain amount of scientific knowledge, the portions of different sciences bearing directly on human action, together with empirical rules relating to the same subject-matter; and also the tact or trained instinct just mentioned, which would even be more prominent here, on account of the extreme complexity of the subject-matter. But such skill hardly seems to be a moral excellence: and certainly the more ordinary use of the term Wisdom seems to include more than a faculty of finding the best means to any ends, as we should not call the most accomplished swindler wise. It seems, in short, to include right apprehension of ends as well as means. Here, however, a subtle question arises. For the assumption on which this treatise proceeds is that there are several ultimate ends of action, which all claim to be rational ends, such as all men ought to adopt. Hence, if Wisdom implies apprehension of right ends, it is clear that a person who regards some one end as the right or rational ultimate end will not consider a man wise who adopts any other ultimate end. Can we say then that in the common use of the word Wisdom any one ultimate end is distinctly implied? It may be thought, perhaps, that in the moral view of Common Sense which we are now trying to make clear, since Wisdom itself is prescribed or commended as a quality of conduct intuitively discerned to be right or excellent, the ultimate end which the wise man prefers must be just this attainment of rightness or excellence in conduct generally; rather than pleasure for himself or others, or any other ulterior end....

§ 2. We are unable, then, to determine by reflecting on Common Sense the principles of conduct which Wisdom will lay down. But leaving this question on one side, we may perhaps ask how far Wisdom, as exhibited in the perception of right ends, is attainable at will, and so, according to our defi-

nition, a Virtue. At first sight, the perception of the right end may seem not to be voluntary any more than the cognition of any other kind of truth; and though most cognition is attained partly by voluntary effort, still it is not possible for any man, by this alone, to exhibit intellectual excellences on any given occasion. It is thought however that the cognition of Moral truth depends largely upon the 'heart,' that is, upon a certain condition of our desires and other feelings, rather than the intellect: it is probably on this view that Wisdom is regarded as a Virtue; and we may admit it as such, according to the definition before given, in so far as this condition is directly attainable by volition. Still, on closer scrutiny, there hardly seems to be more agreement as to the emotional conditions of the cognition of ends than there is as to the ends themselves: as some would say that Prayer to God or ardent aspiration produced the most favourable state.....

So much for the influence of the Will on the decisions of the Reason. But when a man has decided what course of conduct is under any given circumstances rational, the question still remains whether he will certainly adopt it. Now I hardly think that Common Sense considers the *choice*, as distinct from the *cognition*, of right ends to belong to Wisdom: and yet we should hardly call a man wise who deliberately chose to do what he knew to be contrary to reason. We may perhaps explain this by pointing out that, though the modern mind seems to have no difficulty in admitting the conception of deliberate irrationality of conduct[1], still such a notion is unfamiliar in comparison with those of (1) impulsive irrationality, and (2) mistaken choice of bad for good. The latter of these, as we commonly think, is to be averted by Wisdom; the former, by Selfcontrol. If however we admit that "video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor" is often true of conduct planned with perfect deliberation, we must expressly recognize the duty of adopting, after deliberation, the decisions of the Practical Reason; whether we regard this as an exercise of Wisdom or of Selfcontrol, or of both combined. We should distinguish from this the more difficult excellence of adhering to resolutions in spite

[1] I have already adverted to the difference between the ancient and the modern mind in this respect. Cf. *ante*, B. I. c. v, § 1, p. 49 note.

of all gusts of impulse that the varying occasions of life may arouse. It is clearly our duty so to adhere, in so far as it is within the power of the will: as a resolution made after deliberation, in accordance with our view of what is right, should not be modified except deliberately: and this virtue, by some such name as Firmness, is commonly recognised as an indispensable auxiliary to Wisdom. But it can hardly be said to be altogether attainable at will, at least when it is most wanted: for the impulses against which we are especially required to be firm are often too rapid to leave room for a fully conscious act of volition. We can, however, cultivate this excellence more directly and certainly than others, by graving our resolves deeper in the moments of deliberation that continually intervene among the moments of impulsive action.

§ 3.....

...(Conclusion.) We must observe, in conclusion, that none of the maxims discussed in this section are absolute and independent. The Virtues are all subordinate to Wisdom; they are exhibited in the application to practice of the principles which Wisdom is exercised in apprehending.

CHAPTER IV.—X.

THE MORALITY OF COMMON SENSE.

C. IV. § 1. THE virtue of Practical Wisdom obviously comprehends all others[1], in so far as virtuous conduct in each department necessarily results from a clear knowledge and choice of the true ultimate end or ends of action, and of the best means to the attainment of such end or ends.....

...(On p. 210.) But we have to ascertain more particularly the nature of the actions in which this affection or disposition of will is shewn. They are described popularly as 'doing good.' Now we have before[2] noticed that the notion 'good,' in ordinary thought, includes, undistinguished and therefore unharmonized, all the different views that men take of the ultimate end of rational action. It follows that there is a corresponding ambiguity in the phrase 'doing good.' It suggests most prominently the promotion of Happiness: but we find that it is sometimes said, especially by the more severe moralists, that the real way to 'do good' to people is to increase their virtue or aid their progress towards Perfection. Perhaps, however, this usually means that Virtue is the most important source of happiness, and that therefore (rather than *per se*) the promotion of our neighbours' Virtue should be taken as the chief direct aim of true benevolence.

C. V. § 1.... It is an assumption of Intuitionism that the term 'justice' denotes a quality which it is ultimately desirable to realize in the conduct and social relations of men: and that

[1] The qualifications which this proposition requires have been already noticed, and will be further illustrated as we proceed.

[2] Cf. I. c. 7, 9.

a definition may be given of this which will be accepted by all competent judges as presenting, in a clear and explicit form, what they have always meant by the term, though perhaps implicitly and vaguely. In seeking such a definition we may, so to speak, clip the ragged edge of common usage, but we must not make excision of any considerable portion[1].

...(On p. 239.) We cannot affirm generally that all laws ought to affect all persons equally, for this would leave no place for any laws allotting special privileges and burdens to special classes of the community: but we do not think all such laws necessarily unjust: not, for example, that only persons appointed in a certain way should enact and execute laws, or that men should be forced to fight for their country but not women.

...(On p. 243.) For instance, if a poor man were to leave one tradesman and deal with another because the first had turned Quaker, we should hardly call it an act of injustice, though we might think it unreasonable. But if a rich landed proprietor in a country place were to act similarly, many persons would say that it was unjust persecution.

§ 3...(On pp. 246, 7.) Thus (*e.g.*) a society may present a system of castes imperfectly developed, so that the lines of separation are continually transgressed and partially obliterated: and the whole aim of a social reformer may be directed to the more perfect development of this system, by a more rigid separation of the castes. Still, when we reflect upon and compare these types, they appear some better and some worse: and we do not necessarily think that the type to which a more or less indefinitely or inconsistently framed society at any time most approximates is the best, even for the given society at the given time; at any rate, what we are now seeking is not a type

[1] Aristotle, in expounding the virtue of Δικαιοσύνη, which corresponds to our Justice, notices that the word has two meanings; in the wider of which it includes in a manner all Virtue, or at any rate the social side or aspect of Virtue generally. The word 'Justice' does not appear to be used in English in this comprehensive manner (except occasionally in religious writings, from the influence of the Greek word as used in the New Testament): although the verb "to justify" seems to have this width of meaning; for when I say that one is "justified" in doing so and so, I mean no more than that such conduct is right for him. In the present discussion, at any rate, I have confined myself to the more precise signification of the term.

so suggested, but an ideal deduced from some self-evident principles.

§ 4....(On pp. 248, 9.) The Equality at which Justice is thought to aim being interpreted in this special sense of Equality of Freedom.

Now when I contemplate this as an abstract formula, though I cannot say that it is self-evident to me as the true fundamental principle of Ideal Law, I admit that it commends itself much to my mind, and I might perhaps persuade myself that it is owing to the defect of my faculty of moral (or jural) intuition that I fail to see its self-evidence. But when I endeavour to bring it into closer relation to the actual circumstances of human society, it soon comes to wear a different aspect.

§ 6....(On p. 258.) On the necessarian view, then, it would seem to be ideally just (if anything is so) that all men should enjoy equal amounts of happiness: for there seems to be no justice in first making *A* better, or more capable of happiness, than *B*, and then, on that account, making him happier.

C. VI. § 7....(On p. 284.) However, we do not doubt that there are some national contracts, the obligation of which has not this quality of becoming evanescent: and it is hard to see how these are to be distinguished from others, except on grounds of expediency. For example, we think ourselves bound to pay the interest on loans contracted by our forefathers: and most of us think that we are bound to observe their treaties also. And yet a nation is at least excused for repudiating a treaty, when it is humiliating and oppressive: and again, we do not think it eternally bound to observe, as a part of its constitutional law, any compact that may have been made between previously divided or temporarily dissentient sections of itself: even though the compact may have been expressly announced as binding for ever, and though, from the nature of the case, it is impossible to obtain release from it. In short, it seems to be held that some special qualifications of the duty of keeping engagements are needed in the case of nations or other undying corporations: though we can hardly obtain from Common Sense any clear decision as to what these are.

C. VII. § 1....(On p. 290.) At the same time it is no doubt true that when we examine with a view to definition the qualities

that would be enumerated in any list of Virtues, we find, for the most part, that the maxims we obtain are not absolute and independent. In some cases we are forced to include in our definition an express reference to 'duty' or 'good' supposed to be already determined: in others we at any rate see that the quality denoted by our term is only praiseworthy in so far as it promotes individual or general welfare, and becomes blameworthy—though remaining in other respects the same—when it operates adversely to these ends. We have already noticed this result in one or two instances, and it will be illustrated at length in the following chapters.

C. IX. § 1. In chap. 3 we noticed the difficulty of defining Wisdom from the point of view adopted in the present treatise: because Wisdom is the faculty and habit of choosing the best means to the best ends, and in different methods of Ethics different ends are regarded as absolutely best. As (*e.g.*) in Egoistic Hedonism (cf. Book III.) the end of Self-love is so regarded: whereas according to the present method Self-interest (or what may appear such) must always give way to Duty.

C. X. § 1....(On p. 310, 311.) Danger is frequently sudden and needs to be met without deliberation, so that our manner of meeting it can only be, as was before said, *semi-voluntary*.....

So far then as Courage is not completely voluntary, we have to consider whether it is a desirable quality rather than whether we are strictly bound to exhibit it. And here there seems no doubt that we commonly find it morally admirable without reference to any end served by it.....

CHAPTER XI.

REVIEW OF THE MORALITY OF COMMON SENSE.

§ 1.....

We started with admitting the point upon the proof of which moralists have often concentrated their efforts, the existence of apparently independent moral intuitions. It seemed undeniable that men judge acts to be right and wrong in themselves, without consideration of their tendency to produce the agent's happiness or that of others: and indeed without taking their consequences into account at all, except in so far as these are included in the common notion of the act. We saw, however, that in so far as these judgments are passed on particular cases, they seem to involve (at least for the more reflective part of mankind) a reference of the case to some general rule of duty: and that in the frequent cases of doubt or conflict of judgments as to the rightness of any action, appeal is commonly made to such rules or maxims, as the ultimately valid principles of moral cognition. In order, therefore, to throw the Morality of Common Sense into a scientific form, it seemed necessary to obtain as exact a statement as possible of these generally recognised principles. I did not think that I could dispense myself from this task by any summary general argument, based on the unscientific character of common morality. There is no doubt that the moral opinions of ordinary men are in many points loose, shifting, and mutually contradictory, but it does not follow that we may not obtain from this fluid mass of opinion, a deposit of clear and precise principles commanding universal

acceptance[1]. The question, whether we can do this or not, seemed to me one which should be put to the test of experiment: and it is partly in order to prepare materials for this experiment that the survey in the preceding eight chapters has been conducted. I have endeavoured to ascertain impartially, by mere reflection on our common moral discourse, what are the general rules or principles, according to which different kinds of conduct are judged to be right and reasonable in different departments of life. I wish it to be particularly observed, that I have in no case introduced my own views, in so far as I am conscious of their being at all peculiar to myself. My sole object has been to make explicit the implied basis of our common moral reasoning: to formulate and tabulate the ultimate enunciations of that Conscience or Moral Faculty which is thought to be a possession of ordinary men no less than of philosophers. I now wish to subject the results of this survey to a rigorous examination, in order to ascertain whether these general formulæ possess the characteristics by which we distinguish certain truths from mere opinions.

...(Conclusion of § 2.) The reader should observe that throughout this examination a double appeal is made; on the one hand to his individual moral consciousness, and, on the other hand, to the Common Sense of mankind, as expressed generally by the body of persons on whose moral judgment he is prepared to rely. I ask him (1) whether he can state a clear, certain, self-evident first principle, according to which he is prepared to judge conduct under each head: and (2) if so, whether this principle is really that commonly applied in practice, by those whom he takes to represent Common Sense[2].

[1] Truths may be essentially self-evident which are yet not commonly seen to be so: indeed the fundamental notions of science, as they exist in ordinary minds, are so vague that men often accept as true or probable theories of which the impossibility can be demonstrated *à priori*. Nor is this only true of ordinary men. Even Galileo's first hypothesis as to the law of accelerating force involved a mathematical contradiction.

[2] It has been fairly urged that I leave the determination of Common Sense very loose and indefinite: and if I were endeavouring to bring out a more positive result from this examination, I ought certainly to have discussed further how we are to ascertain the 'experts' on whose 'consensus' we are to rely, in this or any other subject. But my scientific conclusions are to so great an extent negative, I thought it hardly necessary to enter upon this discussion. I have

...(On p. 328.) When we ask how far we are bound to give up our own happiness in order to promote that of our fellows, Common Sense if it does not distinctly accept the Utilitarian principle, certainly does not definitely affirm any other.

And even the common principle of Gratitude, though its stringency is perhaps more immediately and universally felt than that of any other moral rule, seems yet essentially uncertain: owing to the unsolved question whether the requital of a benefit ought to be proportionate to what it cost the benefactor, or to what it is worth to the recipient.

§ 5. When we pass to consider that element of Justice under which, as it seemed, the duty of Gratitude might be subsumed, the same difficulty recurs in a more complicated form. For here, too, we have to ask whether the Requital of Desert ought to be proportioned to the benefit rendered, or to the effort made to render it. On the one hand when we scrutinize closely the notion of personal merit, it appears, strictly taken, to imply the metaphysical doctrine of Free Will: since every excellence in any one's actions or productions seems referable ultimately to causes other than himself, except the original energy of the soul put forth in the effort to realize freely chosen Good or Right: and it does not seem strictly just that a man should be rewarded for the qualities which he has by transmission or education, any more than for the wealth or power which may come to him by inheritance. On the other hand it is obviously paradoxical in estimating Desert to omit the moral excellences due to transmission and education: or even intellectual excellences, since good intention without foresight is commonly held to constitute a very imperfect merit. Even if we cut through this speculative difficulty by leaving the ultimate reward of real Desert to Divine Justice; we still seem unable to find any clear principles for framing a scale of merit. And much the same may be said, *mutatis mutandis*, of the scale of Demerit which Criminal Justice seems to require.

been careful not to *exaggerate* the doubtfulness and inconsistency of Common Sense: should it turn out to be *more* doubtful and inconsistent than I have represented it, my argument will only be strengthened.

CHAPTER XII.

MOTIVES OR SPRINGS OF ACTION CONSIDERED AS SUBJECTS OF MORAL JUDGMENT.

§ 1. We saw in ch. 1, that motives as well as actions are commonly regarded as matter of moral intuition: and indeed in our notion of 'conscientiousness' the habit of reflecting on motives, and judging them to be good or bad, is a prominent element. It is necessary, therefore, in order to complete our examination of the Intuitional Method, to consider this comparison of motives, and ascertain how far it can be made systematic, and pursued to conclusions of scientific value. And this seems a convenient place for treating of this part of the subject.....

To avoid confusion, it should be observed that the term 'motive' is commonly used in two ways. It is sometimes applied (as in ch. 1, § 2 of this book) to those among the foreseen consequences of any act which the agent desired in willing: and sometimes to the desire, or conscious impulse itself. The two meanings are in a manner correspondent, as, where impulses are different, there must always be some sort of difference in their respective objects. But for our present purpose it is more convenient to take the latter meaning.....

§ 2....(On p. 346.) For moralists of a Stoical cast (such as Kant) regard all actions as bad—or not good—which are not done from pure love of virtue, or Desire to do Right as Right. While Hutcheson, who represents the opposite pole of Intuitional Ethics, equally distinguishes this impulse; but treats it as at once coordinate in rank and coincident in its effects with Benevolence. It does not seem to me really in accordance with Common Sense to regard the predomi-

nance of this motive as an absolutely essential characteristic of right or even of Virtuous Conduct: indeed (as was before noticed) there are some duties which seem to be better performed if done from other motives; and it would be paradoxical to say that they become better when they cease to be virtuous. But it would be more paradoxical still not to recognise the love of virtue as a distinct impulse, the play of which is attended with its own peculiar satisfaction. And surely we must similarly recognise the more special impulses corresponding to particular virtues; and consider their rank in any scale of motives.

So, again, we may observe how widely moralists diverge in estimating the ethical value of Self-love. For Butler seems to regard it as one of two superior and naturally authoritative impulses.....

§ 3....(On p. 350.) And if it be said that the highest motive present, however feeble compared with others, should always prevail, and that we need only attend to that: then this mode of determining right conduct seems practically to pass over and resolve itself into some other method. For if several virtuous impulses, prompting to realize particular rules or qualities of conduct, are admitted as distinct and independent, these will naturally occupy the highest rank: and if not, then Rational Benevolence, or some similar principle, within the range of which all actions may be comprehended.... And thus our estimate of the value of all motives below the highest turns out to have little practical application, as the final decision as to the rightness of conduct will depend, after all, upon some quite different consideration.

CHAPTER XIII.

PHILOSOPHICAL INTUITIONISM.

§ 1.....

And this is to some extent the case. But Moral Philosophy, or Philosophy as applied to Morality, has had other tasks to occupy it, even more profoundly difficult than that of penetrating to the fundamental principles of Duty. In modern times especially, it has admitted the necessity of demonstrating the harmony of Duty with Interest; that is, with the Happiness or Good of the agent on whom the duty in each case is imposed. It has also undertaken to determine the relation of Right or Good generally to the world of actual existence; a task which could hardly be satisfactorily accomplished without an adequate explanation of the existence of Evil. It has further been distracted by psychological questions (of which, as I have before argued, the importance seems to have been much exaggerated) as to the 'innateness' of our notions of Duty, and the origin of the faculty that furnishes them. With their attention concentrated on these difficult subjects, each of which has been mixed up in various ways with the discussion of fundamental moral intuitions, philosophers have too easily been led to satisfy themselves with ethical formulæ which implicitly accept the morality of Common Sense *en bloc*, ignoring its defects; and merely express a certain view of the relation of this morality to the individual mind or to the universe of actual existence. Perhaps also they have been hampered.....

§ 2.....

The definitions quoted may be found in modern writers:

but it seems worthy of remark that throughout the ethical speculation of Greece[1], such universal affirmations as are presented to us concerning Virtue or Good conduct seem always to be propositions which can only be defended from the charge of tautology, if they are understood as definitions of the problem to be solved, and not as attempts at its solution. For example, we come to the study of Plato and Aristotle, expecting to find that they as constructive moralists have supplied the scientific knowledge on ethical matters of which Socrates proclaimed the absence; knowledge, that is, of the Good and Bad in human life.....

On the Stoic system[2], as constructed by Zeno and Chrysippus, it is perhaps unfair to pronounce decisively,.....bring us back into the original circle at a different point[3].....

I have before suggested that we are liable to slide into another logical circle if we refer to the Good or Perfection, whether of the agent or of others, in giving an account of any special virtue; unless we are careful, in explaining Good or Perfection, not to use the general notion of virtue (which has commonly been regarded as an important element of either). This point will call for special attention in the next chapter. Meanwhile I have already given, perhaps,

[1] I am fully sensible of the peculiar interest and value of the ethical thought of ancient Greece. Indeed through a large part of the present work the influence of Plato and Aristotle on my treatment of this subject has been greater than that of any modern writer. But I am here only considering the value of the general principles for determining what ought to be done, which the ancient systems profess to supply.

[2] The following remarks apply less to *later* Stoicism (which we know at first hand in the writings of Seneca and Marcus Aurelius) in proportion as the relation of the individual man to Humanity generally is more prominent in this than in the earlier form of the system.

[3] It should be observed that in determining the particulars of external duty the Stoics to some extent used the notion 'nature' in a different way: they tried to discover and realize the end or Design of the 'nature' or constitution of the particular things (especially human beings) that make up the Universe. But since in their view the whole course of the Universe was both perfect and completely predetermined, it was impossible for them to obtain from any observation of actual existence a clear and consistent principle for preferring and rejecting alternatives of conduct: and in fact their most characteristic practical precepts shew a curious collision between the tendency to accept what was customary as 'natural,' and the tendency to reject what seemed arbitrary as unreasonable.

more than sufficient illustration of one of the most important dangers that beset the student of Ethics. In the laudable attempt to escape from the doubtfulness, disputableness, and apparent arbitrariness of current moral opinions, he is liable to take refuge in principles that are incontrovertible but insignificant.

§ 3. Can we then, between this Scylla and Charybdis of ethical inquiry, avoiding on the one hand doctrines that merely bring us back to common opinion with all its imperfections, and on the other hand doctrines that lead us round in a circle, find any way of obtaining self-evident moral principles of real significance? It would be disheartening to have to regard as altogether illusory the strong instinct of Common Sense that points to the existence of such principles, and the deliberate convictions of the long line of moralists who have enunciated them. At the same time, the more we extend our knowledge of man and his environment, the more we realize the vast variety of human natures and circumstances that have existed in different ages and countries, the less disposed we are to believe that there is any definite code of absolute rules, applicable to all human beings without exception. And we shall find, I think, that the truth lies between these two conclusions. There are certain absolute practical principles, the truth of which, when they are explicitly stated, is manifest; but they are of too abstract a nature, and too universal in their scope, to enable us to ascertain by immediate application of them what we ought to do in any particular case; particular duties have still to be determined by some other method.

One such principle was given in c. 1, § 3 of this Book; where I pointed out that whatever action any of us judges to be right for himself, he implicitly judges to be right for all similar persons in similar circumstances. Or, as we may otherwise put it, 'if a kind of conduct that is right (or wrong) for me is not right (or wrong) for some one else, it must be on the ground of some difference between the two cases, other than the fact that I and he are different persons[1].' A corresponding proposition may be stated with equal truth in respect of what

[1] I may observe that in c. 7, § 3, I pointed out an important qualification of the practical effect of this rule.

ought to be done *to*—not *by*—different individuals. These principles have been most widely recognized, not in their most abstract and universal form, but in their special application to the mutual relations of two (or more) similarly situated individuals: as so applied, they appear in what is popularly known as the Golden Rule, 'Do to others as you would have them do to you.' This formula is obviously unprecise in statement; for one might wish for another's co-operation in sin, and be willing to reciprocate it. Nor is it even true to say that we ought to do to others only what we think it right for them to do to us; for no one will deny that there may be differences in the circumstances of two individuals, *A* and *B*, which would make it wrong for *A* to treat *B* in the way in which it is right for *B* to treat *A*. In short the rule strictly stated must take some such negative form as this; 'it cannot be right for *A* to treat *B* in a manner in which it would be wrong for *B* to treat *A*, unless we can find some difference between the natures or circumstances of the two which we can state as a reasonable ground for difference of treatment.' Such a principle manifestly does not give complete guidance; but its truth, as far as it goes, is self-evident; and Common Sense has amply recognized its practical importance.

Another commonly recognized application of the principle that individuals in similar circumstances should be treated similarly is found in the administration of Law, or (as we say) of 'Justice.' In § 2 of c. 5 of this Book I drew attention to this 'impartiality in the application of general rules,' as an important element in the common notion of Justice; indeed, there ultimately appeared to be no other element which could be intuitively known with perfect clearness and certainty. Here again it must be plain that this precept of impartiality is insufficient for the complete determination of just conduct, as it does not help us to decide what kind of rules should be thus impartially applied, though we shall of course admit the importance of excluding from government, and human conduct generally, all conscious partiality and 'respect of persons.'

The principles just discussed, each of which seems to be more or less clearly implied in the common notion of 'fairness' or 'equity,' are obtained by considering the similarity of the

individuals that make up a Logical Whole or Genus. There are others, no less important, which emerge in the consideration of the similar parts of a Mathematical or Quantitative Whole. Such a Whole is presented in the common notion of the Good—or, as is sometimes said, 'good on the whole'—of any individual human being. The proposition 'that one ought to aim at one's own good' is sometimes given as the maxim of Rational Self-love or Prudence. As so stated it may seem tautological; since we may define of 'good' as 'what one ought to aim at.' But if we say 'one's good on the whole,' the addition at least suggests a principle which, when explicitly stated, is not tautological; though, like those just discussed, it is merely negative and regulative. I have already referred to this principle as that of 'impartial concern for all parts of our conscious life.' We might give the precept most concisely by saying 'that Hereafter (as such) is to be regarded as much as Now[1]'; *i. e.* the mere difference of priority and posteriority in time is not a reasonable ground for having more regard to the consciousness of one moment than to that of another. The form in which it practically presents itself to most men is 'that a smaller present good is not to be preferred to a greater future good': since Prudence is generally exercised in restraining a present desire (the object or satisfaction of which we recognize as *pro tanto* 'a good'), on account of the remoter consequences of gratifying it. The commonest view of the principle would no doubt be that the present *pleasure* or *happiness* is reasonably to be foregone with the view of obtaining greater pleasure or happiness hereafter. But the principle need not be restricted to a hedonistic application: it is equally applicable to any other interpretation of 'one's own good,' in which good is conceived as a mathematical whole, of which the integrant parts are realized in different parts or moments of a lifetime. And therefore it is perhaps better to distinguish it here from the principle 'that Pleasure is the sole Ultimate Good,' which does not seem to have any logical connexion with it.

So far we have only been considering the 'good (or happi-

[1] It should be observed that we cannot say absolutely that all parts of our conscious life should be equally regarded; because it is possible that greater or more certain good may be realizable in some than in others.

ness) on the whole' of a single individual: but just as this notion is constructed by comparison and integration of the different 'goods' (or pleasures) that succeed one another in the series of our conscious states, so we have formed the notion of Universal Good (or Happiness) which includes the goods (or happinesses) of all individual human—or sentient—existences. And here again, just as in the former case, by considering the relation of the integrant parts to the whole and to each other, we may obtain the self-evident principle that the good of any one individual is of no more importance, as a part of universal good, than the good of any other; unless, that is, there are special grounds for believing that more good is likely to be realized in the one case than in the other. And as rational beings we are manifestly bound to aim at good generally, not merely at this or that part of it; we can only evade the conviction of this obligation by denying that there is any such universal good.

This, then, I hold to be the abstract principle of the duty of Benevolence, so far as it is cognizable by direct intuition; that one is morally bound to regard the good of any other individual as much as one's own, except in so far as it is less, or less certainly knowable or attainable. I before observed[1] that the duty of Benevolence as recognized by common sense seems to fall somewhat short of this. But I think it may be fairly urged as an explanation of this shortcoming that *practically* each man, even with a view to universal Good, ought chiefly to concern himself with promoting the good of a limited number of human beings, and that generally in proportion to the closeness of their connexion with him. I think that the plainest of 'plain men,' if his conscience were fairly brought to consider the hypothetical question, whether it would be right for him to seek his own happiness on any occasion if it involved a sacrifice of the greater happiness of some other human being, would answer unhesitatingly in the negative.

I have tried to shew how in the principles of Prudence, Justice and Rational Benevolence as commonly recognized there is at least a self-evident element, immediately cognizable by abstract intuition. I regard the apprehension, with more or

[1] c. 4, § 3.

less distinctness, of these abstract truths, as the permanent basis of the common conviction that the fundamental precepts of morality are essentially reasonable. No doubt by loose thinkers these principles are often placed side by side with other precepts to which custom and general consent have given a merely illusory air of self-evidence: but this seems to be less the case in proportion as a writer is in earnest in seeking among commonly received moral rules for genuine intuitions of the Practical Reason. For example, there is no English moralist who shews more earnestness of this sort than Clarke. Accordingly, we find that Clarke lays down, in respect of our behaviour towards our fellow-men, two fundamental "rules of righteousness:" the first of which he terms Equity, and the second Love or Benevolence. The Rule of Equity he states thus: "Whatever I judge reasonable or unreasonable that another should do for me: that by the same judgment I declare reasonable or unreasonable that I should *in the like case* do for him"—which is, of course, the 'Golden Rule' precisely stated. The obligation to "Universal Love or Benevolence" he exhibits as follows:—

"If there be a natural and necessary difference between Good and Evil: and that which is Good is fit and reasonable, and that which is Evil is unreasonable, to be done: and that which is the Greatest Good is always the most fit and reasonable to be chosen: then...every rational creature ought in its sphere and station, according to its respective powers and faculties, to do all the Good it can to its fellow-creatures: to which end, universal Love and Benevolence is plainly the most certain, direct, and effectual means."

Here the mere statement that a rational agent is bound to aim at universal good is open to the charge of tautology, since Clarke defines 'Good' as 'that which is fit and reasonable to be done.' But Clarke obviously holds that each individual creature is capable of receiving good in a greater or less degree, such good being an integrant part of universal good. This indeed is implied in the common notion, which he uses, of 'doing Good to one's fellow-creatures,' or, as he otherwise expresses it, 'promoting their welfare and happiness.' And thus his principle is implicitly what was stated above, that the

good, welfare, or happiness of any one individual cannot as such have more of the quality of good than the equal good of any other individual.

§ 4. Among modern moralists other than English, Kant would be generally admitted to have been especially careful and rigorous in separating the purely rational element of the moral code. Now we have already noticed that his fundamental principle of duty is the 'formal' rule of "acting on a maxim that one can will to be law universal"; which is the principle that I first noticed in the preceding section, thrown into an imperative and immediately practical form. And we find that when he comes to consider the ends at which virtuous action is aimed, the only really ultimate end which he lays down is the object of Rational Benevolence as commonly conceived—the happiness of other men[1]. Owing, however, to the error before pointed out of exaggerating the efficacy of his formal principle in determining right conduct, he makes an unsuccessful attempt to exhibit the duty of Benevolence as an immediate deduction from this formula.....

We observe, however, that by whatever arguments it is reached, Kant's conclusion is in substantial agreement with the view of the duty of Benevolence that I gave in the preceding section. He regards it as evident *à priori* that each rational agent is bound to aim at the happiness of all other rational beings no less than its own: nay, in his view, it can only be stated as a *duty* for me to seek my own happiness in so far as I consider it a part of Universal Happiness.

§ 5. Here then we have arrived, in our search for really clear and certain ethical intuitions, at the fundamental maxim of Utilitarianism. It must be admitted indeed that the thinkers who in recent times have taught the utilitarian system, have not usually tried to exhibit the truth of their first principle by means of the reasoning above given. Still, whenever they do offer anything like a proof of this principle, it seems to involve some such reasoning, or at least to be logically incomplete with-

[1] Kant no doubt gives the agent's own Perfection as another absolute end; but when we come to examine his notion of perfection, we find that it is not really determinate without the statement of other ends of reason, for the accomplishment of which we are to perfect ourselves.

out it. To illustrate this, let us consider the proof that Mill gives of the "principle of utility" in ch. 4 of his *Utilitarianism*[1].

...But the conclusion at which he actually arrives is that 'general happiness' is a "good to the aggregate"; and it can hardly be said to be an immediate inference from this that the individual ought to aim at realizing it. In fact there is a gap in the expressed argument, which must, I think, have been consciously or unconsciously filled in Mill's mind by what I have above tried to exhibit as the intuition of Rational Benevolence.

Utilitarianism thus appears as the final form into which a really scientific Intuitionism tends to pass. In order, however, to make this transition logically complete, we require to interpret 'Universal Good' into 'Universal Happiness.' And this interpretation cannot, in my view, be justified by arguing, as Mill does, from the psychological fact that Happiness is the sole object of men's actual desires, to the ethical conclusion that it alone is desirable or good: because in Book I. ch. 4 of this treatise I attempted to shew that Happiness or Pleasure is not the only object that each for himself actually desires. This conclusion is properly to be reached, I think, by a more indirect mode of reasoning; which I will endeavour to explain in the next Chapter.

[1] It has been suggested that I have overlooked a confusion in Mill's mind between two possible meanings of the term 'desirable,' (1) what can be desired and (2) what ought to be desired. I intended to shew by the two first sentences of this paragraph that I was aware of this confusion, but thought it unnecessary for my present purpose to discuss it.

CHAPTER XIV.

ULTIMATE GOOD.

§ 1. At the outset of this treatise[1] I noticed that there are two forms in which the object of ethical inquiry is considered; it is sometimes regarded as a Rule or Rules of Conduct, 'the Right,' sometimes as an end or ends, 'the Good.' Many moralists interpret one of these notions into the other, by saying either that the sole Good is the fulfilment of absolute Rules, or that the sole absolute Rule is the precept to 'aim at Good.' But it seems to me that in the moral view of modern Europe the two notions are *prima facie* distinct: since while it is thought that the obligation to obey moral rules is absolute, it is not commonly held that the whole Good of man lies in such obedience; this view, we may say, is respectfully repudiated as a Stoical paradox. The 'Summum Bonum' of man is rather regarded as an ulterior result, the connexion of which with his Right Conduct is indeed certain, but less cognizable by us than the Rightness of Conduct itself: in fact this connexion is frequently conceived as supernatural, and so beyond the range of independent ethical speculation. But now, if the conclusions of the preceding chapters are to be trusted, it would seem (1) that most of the commonly received maxims of Duty—even of those which at first sight appear absolute and independent—are found when closely examined to contain an implicit subordination to the more general principles of Prudence and Benevolence: and (2) that no principles except these can be admitted as at once intuitively clear and certain and complete as a direction

[1] Cf. Bk. I. c. 1, § 2.

for conduct[1]. While again these principles themselves, so far as they are immediately known by abstract intuition, can only be stated as precepts to seek (1) one's own good on the whole, and (2) the good of any other no less than one's own, in so far as it is no less an element of universal good. It appears then that we are after all brought round again to the old question with which ethical speculation in Europe began, 'What is the Ultimate Good for man?' When however we examine the controversies to which this question originally led, we see that the investigation which has brought us round to it has at any rate shewn us the necessity of excluding the chief answer that orthodox Greek moralists generally gave to it. It will not do for us to say that 'General Good' consists in general Virtue; that is, in the prescriptions and prohibitions that make up the morality of Common Sense. This would obviously involve us in a logical circle; if we are right in holding that the exact determination of these prescriptions and prohibitions must depend on the definition of this General Good.

It may be thought, perhaps, that this argument applies only to morality considered as a code of rules; and that it may be evaded by adopting the view of what I have called 'Æsthetic Intuitionism' and regarding Virtues as excellences of conduct clearly discernible by trained insight, although their nature does not admit of being stated in definite formulæ. But it will be seen on closer inspection that our notions of special virtues do not really become more independent by becoming more indefinite: they still contain, though perhaps more latently, the same reference to 'Good' or 'Wellbeing' as an ultimate standard. This appears clearly when we consider any virtue in relation to the cognate vice—or at least *non-virtue*—into which it tends to pass over when pushed to an extreme, or exhibited under inappropriate conditions. For example, Common Sense may seem to regard Liberality, Frugality, Courage, Placability as intrinsically desirable: but when we consider their relation respectively to Profusion, Meanness, Foolhardiness, Weakness, we find that Common Sense draws

[1] Kant's formal principle, and its application in the Rule of Equity, were seen to be obviously incomplete as directing conduct.

the line in each case not by immediate intuition, but by reference either to some definite maxim of duty, or to the general notion of 'Good' or Wellbeing: and similarly when we ask at what point Candour, Generosity, Humility, cease to be virtues by becoming 'excessive.' Other qualities commonly admired such as Energy, Zeal, Self-control, Thoughtfulness are obviously regarded as Virtues only when they are directed to good ends. In short, the only so-called Virtues which can be thought to be essentially and always such, and incapable of excess, are such qualities as Wisdom, Universal Benevolence, and perhaps Justice; of which the notions manifestly involve this notion of Good, supposed already determinate. Wisdom is insight into Good and the means to Good; Benevolence is exhibited in doing Good: Justice (when so regarded) lies in distributing Good (or evil) impartially according to right rules. If then we are asked what is this Good which it is excellent to know, to bestow on others, to distribute impartially, it would be absurd to reply that it is just this knowledge, this beneficent impulse, this impartial distribution. Thus however practically important Virtue may be, however prominent it may properly be made in a popular description of the Good or Desirable life, we cannot, without manifest divergence from Common Sense, introduce it in a scientific explanation of the nature of Ultimate Good.

And if this be true of Virtue, it seems to be yet more evidently true of most of the other graces and gifts, bodily or mental, which make up the common notion of human Excellence or Perfection. Although the goodness of such gifts and skills may be recognized and admired instinctively, reflection shews us that they are conceived as essentially relative to some Good which they contribute to produce and maintain.

Shall we then fall back on the other answer which Greek speculation brought out in continually sharper antithesis to the view that Ultimate Good was Virtue; and say that it is Pleasure or Happiness? Perhaps the majority of mankind would affirm this without hesitation; and accordingly in my examination of the common rules of morality I have sometimes stated 'general happiness' as the end or standard to which the

rule was found implicitly to refer[1]. But more often it has seemed to me more correct to give the reference vaguely to 'good' (or sometimes 'expediency') or wellbeing; recognizing that there are many persons who are not prepared to interpret these wider notions in terms of Pleasure. What then can we say of Good or Wellbeing, if we are not to say that it is Virtue, nor yet that it is Happiness?

This question was discussed to some extent in c. 9 of Book I. It there appeared that we could not, on reflection, maintain anything to be intrinsically and ultimately good, except in so far as it entered into relation to consciousness of some kind and rendered that good and desirable: and thus that the only ultimate Good, or End in itself, must be Goodness or Excellence of Conscious Life.

When, however, we have so far limited the application of the notion Good to conscious life, it may seem that our result is really identical with what we call Happiness: that to say that all other things called good are only means to the end of making conscious life intrinsically better or more desirable, is in fact saying that they are means to the end of happiness. On the other hand it seems clear that in ordinary thought consciousness[2], active and passive, is conceived to be preferable on other grounds than its pleasantness. The explanation seems to be (as was suggested in Book II. c. 2, § 2) that when we judge one

[1] I have done this (*e.g.*) in the case of Benevolence; and elsewhere where *pain* or *pleasure* of any kind seemed clearly to come within the purview of Common Sense.

[2] I have used the term "consciousness" rather than "feeling" throughout the present section, to denote the genus of which pleasure and pain are species; because the reader's attention is being directed to Cognitions and Volitions, and many psychologists would not consider these as different, though inseparable, from Feelings. But no one, I think, will maintain that the element of consciousness denoted by the term 'Cognition' in so far as it can be distinguished on the one hand from the accompanying feeling, and on the other hand from the objective relation of the knowing mind to the object known (which is also implied in the term 'cognition'), is intrinsically desirable, or the reverse: and similarly of Volition. Hence in Bk. II. I did not hesitate to define pleasure as a kind of Feeling. If however any one were to affirm that cognitive or active consciousness, regarded as consciousness, and distinguished from feeling, is intrinsically desirable, we should say that such consciousness was for him a pleasure and modify our definition accordingly.

kind of consciousness to be more pleasant than another, we judge it to be preferable considered merely as consciousness, without taking into account the conditions under which it occurs; but when we judge it to be better though less pleasant, what we really prefer is no longer the consciousness itself, but something in its conditions, concomitants or consequences.

We may illustrate this by reference to some of those ideal objects, for the sake of which it is sometimes thought that a rational being ought to sacrifice human happiness. We may prefer... ...elevated exercise of taste.

§ 2. If such objects, then, as Truth, Freedom, Beauty, &c., or, strictly speaking, the objective relations of conscious minds which we call cognition of Truth, contemplation of Beauty, Independence of action, &c., are Good, independently of the pleasures that we derive from them, it must be reasonable to aim at these for mankind generally and not as happiness only: and so the principle of Rational Benevolence, which was stated in the last chapter as an indubitable intuition of the practical Reason, does not seem to direct us to the pursuit of universal happiness alone, but of these other ends as well. And this view though not, I think, the prevailing one, is at any rate widely accepted among cultivated persons.

On reflection, however, I think this will appear to be an unsound view. In order to shew this, I must ask the reader to use the same twofold procedure that I before requested him to employ in considering the absolute and independent validity of common moral precepts. I appeal firstly to his intuitive judgment after due consideration of the question when fairly placed before it: and secondly to a comprehensive comparison of the ordinary judgments of mankind. As regards the first argument, to me at least it seems clear that these objective relations of the conscious subject, when distinguished in reflective analysis from the consciousness accompanying and resulting from them, are not ultimately and intrinsically desirable: any more than material or other objects are, when considered out of relation to conscious existence altogether. Admitting that we have actual experience of such preferences as have just been described, of which the ultimate object is something that is not merely consciousness: it still seems to me that when (to use Butler's phrase)

we "sit down in a calm moment," we can only justify to ourselves the importance that we attach to any of these objects by considering its conduciveness, in one way or another, to the happiness of conscious (or sentient) beings.

The second argument, that refers to the common sense of mankind, obviously cannot be made completely cogent; since, as above stated, several cultivated persons do habitually judge that knowledge, art, &c., are ends independently of the pleasure derived from them. But we may urge not only that all these elements of "ideal good" are productive of pleasure in various ways; but also that they seem to obtain the commendation of Common Sense, roughly speaking, in proportion to the degree of this productiveness. This seems obviously true of Beauty; and will hardly be denied in respect of any kind of social ideal: it is paradoxical to maintain that any degree of Freedom, or any form of social order, would still be commonly regarded as desirable even if we were certain that it had no tendency to promote the general happiness. The case of Knowledge is rather more complex; but certainly Common Sense is most impressed with the value of knowledge, when its 'fruitfulness' has been demonstrated. It is, however, aware that experience has frequently shewn how knowledge, long fruitless, may become unexpectedly fruitful, and how light may be shed on one part of the field of knowledge from another apparently remote: and even if any particular branch of scientific pursuit could be shewn to be devoid of even this indirect utility, it would still deserve some respect on utilitarian grounds; both as furnishing to the inquirer the refined and innocent pleasures of curiosity, and because the intellectual disposition which it exhibits and sustains, is likely on the whole to produce fruitful knowledge. Still in cases approximating to this latter, Common Sense is somewhat disposed to complain of the misdirection of valuable effort; so that the meed of honour commonly paid to Science seems to be graduated, though perhaps unconsciously, by a tolerably exact utilitarian scale. Certainly the moment the legitimacy of any branch of scientific inquiry is seriously disputed, as in the recent case of vivisection, the controversy on both sides is generally conducted on an avowedly utilitarian basis.

At the same time it must be allowed...(on p. 374)...between

the two kinds of reasonableness. But when 'Reasonable Self-love' has been clearly distinguished from Conscience, as it is by Butler and his followers, we find it is naturally understood to mean desire for one's own Happiness: so that in fact the interpretation of 'one's own good,' which was almost peculiar in ancient thought to the Cyrenaic and Epicurean heresies, is adopted by some of the most orthodox of modern moralists. Indeed it often does not seem to have occurred to these latter that this notion can have any other interpretation[1]. If then, when any one hypothetically concentrates his attention on himself, Good is naturally and almost inevitably conceived to be Pleasure, we shall hardly conclude that the Good of any number of similar beings, whatever their mutual relations may be, can be something essentially different in quality....

Thus, then, we are finally led to the conclusion (which at the close of the last chapter seemed to be premature) that the Intuitional method rigorously applied yields as its final result the doctrine of pure Universalistic Hedonism[2].

§ 3. If, however, this view be rejected, it remains to consider whether we can frame any other coherent account of Ultimate Good. If we are not to systematize human activities by taking Universal Happiness as their common end, on what other principles are we to systematize them? It should be observed that these principles must not only enable us to compare among themselves the values of the different non-hedonis-

[1] Cf. Stewart, *Philosophy of the Active and Moral Powers*, Bk. II. c. 1.

[2] I have before noticed (Bk. II. c. 3, note) the metaphysical objection taken by certain writers to the view that Happiness is Ultimate Good; on the ground that Happiness (= sum of pleasures) can only be realized in successive parts, whereas a "Chief Good" must be "something of which some being can be conceived in possession"—something, that is, which he can have all at once. On considering this objection it seemed to me that, in so far as it is even plausible, its plausibility depends on the exact form of the notion 'a Chief Good' (or 'Summum Bonum'), which is perhaps inappropriate as applied to Happiness. I have therefore in this chapter used the notion of 'Ultimate Good': as I can see no shadow of reason for affirming that that which is Good or Desirable *per se*, and not as a means to some further end, must *necessarily* be something capable of being possessed all at once. I can understand that a man may aspire after a Good of this latter kind: but so long as Time is a necessary form of human existence, it can hardly be surprising that human good should be subject to the condition of being realized in successive parts.

tic ends which we have been considering, but must also provide a common standard for comparing these values with that of Happiness; unless we are prepared to adopt the paradoxical position of rejecting happiness as absolutely valueless. For we have a practical need of determining not only whether we should pursue Truth rather than Beauty, or Freedom or some ideal constitution of society rather than either, or perhaps desert all of these for the life of worship and religious contemplation; but also how far we should follow any of these lines of endeavour, when we foresee among its consequences the pains of human or other sentient beings, or even the loss of pleasures that might otherwise have been enjoyed by them[1].

The former of these problems is sometimes evaded by saying that each man has his own special gifts and capabilities, and must cultivate and develope these, and so attain each his own perfection. But it has been already seen[2] that there is, as far as we can ascertain, no such definite original constitution in each human being as this seems to imply. Human nature is a raw material, varying no doubt from individual to individual, and less modifiable in some than in others; but in all cases apparently capable of being moulded into an indefinite number of different shapes according to different patterns. We may admit that the reasonable pattern for each individual varies somewhat according to the variation of the material: but we must at any rate think that it varies on grounds intrinsically universal, so that all the various results are deducible from some universal principles that all ought to accept. We are thus led back to the question, What are these principles?

I have failed to find any serious and systematic attempt to answer this question: and hence I am unable to develope the ethical method which takes Ultimate Good to consist in Perfection of life, as distinct from Happiness; whether this Perfection be sought for the individual agent, or for mankind or the universe. But before I conclude I should notice a view of the Well-

[1] The controversy on vivisection, to which I referred just now, affords a good illustration of the need that I am pointing out. I do not observe that any one in this controversy has ventured on the paradox that the pain of sentient beings is not *per se* to be avoided.

[2] B. II. c. 5.

being or Welfare of living things, suggested by current zoological conception and apparently maintained with more or less definiteness by influential living writers; which, if it could be accepted, might enable us to get rid summarily of all the difficulties involved in the investigation of Ultimate Good. On this view, when we attribute 'goodness' or 'badness' to the manner of existence of any living organism, we should be understood to attribute to it a tendency either (1) to self-preservation or (2) to the preservation of the community or race to which it belongs. What 'Wellbeing' in short adds to mere Being is the promise of future being. I have drawn attention to this view because there appears to me to be an important element of truth in it, which is sometimes overlooked in the Utilitarian explanation and synthesis of morality. Living somehow is an indispensable condition of living well; and we shall all agree that men cannot live well except they live as members of an organized society: and accordingly we may admit that a most fundamentally important part of the function of morality consists in maintaining such habits and sentiments as are necessary to the continual existence, in full numbers, of a society of human beings under actual circumstances. But it is another thing to say that supposing a perpetuity of existence secured for a community or race of living things, there is nothing more to be reasonably desired for it: indeed if we consider the assertion as made with regard to our own society or race, it seems unnecessary to prove that the mere maintenance of preservative habits and sentiments does not exhaust our notion of Good or Desirable life.

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER I.

THE MEANING OF UTILITARIANISM.

By Utilitarianism is here meant the ethical theory, first distinctly formulated by Bentham, that the conduct which, under any given circumstances, is externally or objectively right, is that which will produce the greatest amount of happiness on the whole...[1]

...In all such cases, therefore, it becomes practically important to ask whether any mode of distributing happiness is better than any other. Now the Utilitarian formula seems to supply no answer to this question: at least we have to supplement the principle of seeking the greatest happiness on the whole by some principle of Just or Right distribution of this happiness. The principle which most Utilitarians have either tacitly or expressly adopted is that of pure equality: as given in Bentham's formula, "everybody to count for one, and nobody for more than one." And this principle is obviously the simplest, and the only one which does not need a special justification: for, as we saw, it must be reasonable to treat any one man in the same way as any other, if there be no reason apparent for treating him differently[2].

[1] I have substituted this phrase in this edition for 'greatest happiness of the greatest number'; and made corresponding changes throughout the chapter.

[2] It should be observed that the question here is as to the distribution of *Happiness*, not the *means of happiness*.

CHAPTER II.

THE PROOF OF UTILITARIANISM.

In Book II., where we discussed the method of Egoistic Hedonism, we did not take occasion to examine any proof of its first principle: nor, again, in examining Intuitionism, did we demand demonstration of the principles put forward as intuitively known: but only inquired whether they possessed the characteristics which seem to be indispensable in the premises or axioms of a scientific method. In the case of Universalistic Hedonism also, what chiefly concerns us is not how its principle is to be proved to those who do not accept it, but what consequences are logically involved in its acceptance. At the same time it is important to observe that while the principle of Egoism is unquestioningly accepted by the majority of minds, and that of Intuitionism is at least openly challenged by few; Utilitarianism is generally felt to require some proof, or at least (as Mill puts it) some "considerations determining the mind to accept it." Few minds are prepared to admit as self-evident that one ought to aim at happiness universally; while the propositions 'that it is reasonable to seek one's own happiness,' and 'that it is reasonable to obey the established rules of morality,' would very frequently be allowed to pass without question.....

It undoubtedly seems to Common Sense paradoxical to ask for a reason why one should seek one's own happiness. That one ought to obey the commonly received rules of morality is perhaps not held to be quite equally obvious. Indeed probably no thoughtful person would maintain the proposition so stated to be axiomatic: and we find that reasons are continually given for this and that particular moral maxim. Still the fact

that certain rules are commonly received as binding renders it generally unnecessary to prove their authority to the Common Sense that receives them: while for the same reason a Utilitarian who claims to supersede them by a higher principle is naturally challenged to demonstrate the legitimacy of his claim. To this challenge Utilitarians often reply by saying that it is impossible to "prove" a first principle.....

If the Egoist strictly confines himself to stating his conviction that he ought to take his own happiness or pleasure as his ultimate end, there seems no opening for any line of reasoning to lead him to Universalistic Hedonism as a first principle[1].... When, however, the Egoist offers, either as a reason for his Egoistic principle, or as another form of stating it, the proposition that his happiness or pleasure is Good, not only *for him* but absolutely; he gives the ground needed for such a proof. For we can then point out to him that *his* happiness cannot be a more important part of Good, taken universally, than the equal happiness of any other person. And thus, starting with his own principle, he must accept the wider notion of Universal happiness or pleasure as representing the real end of Reason, the absolutely Good or Desirable: as the end, therefore, to which the action of a reasonable agent as such ought to be directed.

This, it will be remembered, is the reasoning that I used in ch. 13 of the preceding book in exhibiting the principle of Rational Benevolence as one of the few Intuitions which stand the test of rigorous criticism.

(Conclusion.)...the proof of Utilitarianism will be probably as complete as it can be made. And since it is of the utmost importance in considering the method of Utilitarianism to determine exactly its relation to the commonly received rules of morality; it will be convenient to examine this relation at some length in the following chapter.

[1] It is to be observed that he may be led to it in other ways than that of argument: *i. e.* by appeals to his sympathies, or to his moral or quasi-moral sentiments.

CHAPTER III.

RELATION OF UTILITARIANISM TO THE MORALITY OF COMMON SENSE.

§ 1.....

(On p. 395.)...That the right action is under all circumstances that which will produce the greatest possible happiness on the whole. But it must be borne in mind that Utilitarianism is not concerned to prove the absolute coincidence in results of the Intuitional and Utilitarian methods. Indeed, if it could succeed in proving as much as this, its success would be in a manner suicidal, as it would then be practically indifferent whether we did or did not adopt the Utilitarian principle.

(On p. 400.)...In order, however, to form a precise estimate of the extent to which Utilitarianism agrees or disagrees with Common Sense, it seems best to examine the more definite judgments of right and wrong in conduct, rather than the vaguer awards of praise and admiration to dispositions. But before we proceed, with this object, to discuss notions of virtue and duty, it should be observed that there are some among these notions, the examination of which cannot really affect our decision of the present question: since their definitions inevitably involve, in some manner or other, the notion of 'good' or 'right' supposed already determinate....

And, for a similar reason, we need not specially examine another large class of virtues, which, as commonly formulated, do not seem to refer explicitly to any higher principle: but in which, nevertheless, reflection forces us to suppose such a reference, if we would make their maxims sufficiently precise to guide conduct. For such reference must be either under-

stood to be made directly to general happiness or wellbeing; or else to some other definite rule of duty, taken as absolute: if then all such apparently definite and ultimate rules can be shewn to have a latent Utilitarian basis, it seems evident that a similar result may be taken as admitted for all derivative and less definite maxims.

(On p. 412.)..." salus populi suprema lex."

These and similar common opinions seem at least to suggest that the limits of the duty of Law-observance are to be determined by Utilitarian considerations. While, again, the Utilitarian view gets rid...

...(On p. 421.) The offence is commonly more deliberate in the man, who has the additional guilt of soliciting and persuading the woman; in the latter, again, it is far more often prompted by some motive that we rank higher than mere lust: so that, according to the ordinary canons of Intuitional Morality, it ought to be more severely condemned in the man.....

CHAPTERS IV, V.

THE METHOD OF UTILITARIANISM.

§ 1. If the view maintained in the preceding chapter as to the general Utilitarian basis of the Morality of Common Sense may be regarded as sufficiently established, we are now in a position to consider more closely to what method of determining right conduct the acceptance of Utilitarianism will practically lead.....

...From the considerations that we have just surveyed it is but a short and easy step to the conclusion that in the morality of Common Sense we have ready to hand a body of Utilitarian doctrine: so that, in Baconian phrase, the principles of Common Sense may be regarded as the "middle axioms" of Utilitarianism....

Nor does the case seem to be materially altered even by the complete acceptance of the hypothesis, now very prevalent among naturalists and sociologists, that the moral sense is entirely derived from experiences of pleasure and pain. The hypothesis, in its completest form, would seem to be this; that the experience of each member of the human community impresses itself on the consciousness of others, partly by their direct sympathy with his pleasures and pains, and partly through their regard for his gratitude and resentment, goodwill and hatred, and their consequences; that these impressions are retained and accumulated, and confirmed and kept from divergence by the mutual sympathy of all; that their effects are transmitted from generation to generation, partly by physical inheritance, and partly by tradition from parents to children, and imitation of adults by the young; and that

thus common likings or (aversions) for conduct that affects pleasurably (or painfully) the community generally or some part of it, are gradually developed, till they become what we now know as the moral sentiments. That this hypothesis represents a true, if not a complete, cause appears to me nearly certain; and I regard it as furnishing a valuable supplement to the arguments of the preceding chapter that tend to exhibit the morality of common sense as unconsciously or 'instinctively' utilitarian. I think, however, that in a complete view of the development of the moral sense a more prominent place should be given to the effect of sympathy with the impulses that prompt to actions, as well as with the feelings that result from them.....

...(On pp. 433—434.) It has already been observed that whenever such divergent opinions are entertained by a minority so large, that we cannot fairly regard the dogma of the majority as the plain utterance of Common Sense, an appeal is necessarily made to some higher principle, and very commonly to Utilitarianism.

...(On p. 441.)...there are, as we saw, other ends besides Happiness, such as Knowledge, Beauty, &c., commonly recognized as *per se* desirable: but when the pursuit of any of these ends involves an apparent sacrifice of happiness in other ways (as in the case of physiological researches, where knowledge cannot be attained without causing pain, or as when it is proposed to support Art or Science out of the taxes), the practical question whether such pursuit ought to be allowed or maintained under the circumstances in question, seems always decided by an application, however rough, of the method of pure empirical Hedonism.

...(On p. 442.) The particulars of this criticism will obviously vary with the almost infinite variations in human nature and circumstances: a detailed Utilitarian casuistry would be a manifest absurdity. We have here only to discuss the general points of view which a Utilitarian critic must take, in order

(Note to p. 439.) At the same time this sentiment, which Kant among others has expressed with peculiar force (*Kritik der prakt. Vern.* Beschluss), is in no way incompatible with Utilitarianism; only it must not attach itself to any subordinate rules of conduct.

that no important class of relevant considerations may be omitted.

...(On p. 450.) Here, however, we seem brought into conflict with Kant's fundamental principle, that a right action must be one of which the agent could "will the maxim to be law universal": and yet this was accepted as a self-evident truth. But, as was before noticed in the particular case of veracity, we must admit an application of this principle, which importantly modifies its practical force: we must admit the case where the belief that the action will not be widely imitated is an essential qualification of the maxim. In fact, the Kantian principle means no more than that an act, if right for me, must be right on general grounds and therefore for some class of persons; but it gives no reason why this class should not be defined by the above-mentioned characteristic of believing that the act will remain an exceptional one.....

...(On p. 456.)...The 'social sanction' would be less effective if it became purely penal. Indeed, since the pains of remorse and disapprobation are in themselves to be avoided, it is plain that the Utilitarian construction of a Jural morality is essentially self-limiting; that is, it prescribes its own avoidance of any department of conduct in which the addition that can be made to happiness through the enforcement of rules sustained by social penalties appears doubtful or inconsiderable. In such departments, however, the æsthetic phase of morality may still reasonably find a place; we may properly admire and praise where it would be inexpedient to judge and condemn. We may conclude, then, that it is reasonable for a Utilitarian to praise any conduct more felicific in its tendency than what an average man would do under the given circumstances. .....

CONCLUDING CHAPTER.

THE MUTUAL RELATIONS OF THE THREE METHODS.

§ 1. In the greater part of the treatise of which the final chapter has now been reached, we have been employed in examining three methods of determining right conduct, which are for the most part found more or less vaguely combined in the practical reasonings of ordinary men, but which it has been my aim to develope as separately as possible. To attempt a complete synthesis of these different methods does not fall within the scope of the present work: at the same time it would hardly be satisfactory to conclude our analysis of them without discussing their mutual relations. Indeed we have already found it expedient to do this to a considerable extent, in the course of our examination of the separate methods. Thus in ch. 5 of B. II. we considered the relation of Egoism to those commonly-received rules of social behaviour, which the Intuitional method either accepts as self-evident principles or exhibits as immediate deductions from such principles. So, again, in the present and preceding books we have directly or indirectly gone through a pretty full examination of the mutual relations of the Intuitional and Utilitarian methods. The results of this examination may be conveniently stated here in a succinct form. We have found that the common antithesis between Intuitionists and Utilitarians must be entirely discarded: since such abstract moral principles as we can admit to be really self-evident are not only not incompatible with a Utilitarian system, but even seem required to furnish a rational basis for such a system. Thus we have seen that the essence of Justice or Equity, (in so far as it is clear and certain,) is that different

individuals are not to be treated differently, except on grounds of universal application: which grounds, again, are given in the principle of Universal Benevolence, that sets before each man the happiness of all others as an object of pursuit no less worthy than his own; while, again, other time-honoured virtues seem to be fitly explained as special manifestations of impartial benevolence under various normal circumstances of human life, or else as habits and dispositions indispensable to the maintenance of prudent or beneficent behaviour under the seductive force of various non-rational impulses. And although there are other rules which our common moral sense when first interrogated seems to enunciate as absolutely binding; it has appeared that careful and systematic reflection on this very Common Sense, as expressed in the habitual moral judgments of ordinary men, results in exhibiting the real subordination of these rules to the fundamental principles above given. Then, further, this method of systematising particular virtues and duties receives very strong support from a comparative study of the history of morality; as the variations in the moral code of different societies at different stages correspond, at least generally, to differences in the actual or believed tendencies of certain kinds of conduct to promote the good of society. While, again, the account given by our evolutionists of the pre-historic condition of the moral faculty, which represents it as derived aboriginally from the social instincts, is entirely in harmony with this view. No doubt, even if this synthesis of methods be completely accepted, there will remain some discrepancy in details between our particular moral sentiments and spontaneous judgments on the one hand, and the apparent results of special utilitarian calculations on the other; and we may often have some practical difficulty in weighing the latter against the more general utilitarian reasons for obeying the former: but there can be no longer any theoretical perplexity as to the principles for determining social duty.

It remains for us to consider the relation of the two species of Hedonism which we have distinguished as Universalistic and Egoistic. In ch. 2 of this book we have discussed the rational process (called by a stretch of language 'proof') by which one who holds it reasonable to aim at his own greatest happiness

may be determined to take Universal Happiness instead, as his ultimate standard of right conduct. We have seen, however, that the Egoist may avoid the application of this process: and it may be observed that Utilitarians generally, however anxious they have been to convince men of the reasonableness of aiming at happiness generally, have not commonly sought to attain this result by any logical transition from the Egoistic to the Universalistic principle. They have relied almost entirely on the Sanctions of Utilitarian rules; that is, on the pleasures gained or pains avoided by the individual conforming to them. And indeed if an Egoist remains impervious to what we have called Proof, the only way of rationally inducing him to aim at the happiness of all, is to shew him that his own greatest happiness can be best attained by so doing. It thus becomes needful to examine how far this demonstration can be effected.

...(On p. 470.)...In order fairly to perform this examination, let us reflect upon the clearest and most certain of our moral intuitions. I find that I undoubtedly seem to perceive, as clearly and certainly as I see any axiom in Arithmetic or Geometry, that it is 'right' and 'reasonable,' for me to treat others as I should think that I myself ought to be treated under similar conditions, and to do what I believe to be ultimately conducive to universal Good or Happiness. But I cannot find inseparably connected with this conviction, and similarly attainable by mere reflective intuition, any cognition that there actually is a Supreme Being who will adequately[1] reward me for obeying these rules of duty, or punish me for violating them.

...(Conclusion.) But it must be urged again that we do not fully conceive the argument in favour of the assumption that we are now considering, if we merely represent this as satisfying certain Desires. We have rather to regard it as an hypothesis logically necessary to avoid a fundamental contradiction in one chief department of our thought. Whether this necessity constitutes a sufficient reason for accepting the hypothesis, is a question which I cannot here attempt ade-

[1] It may be well to remind the reader that by 'adequate' is here meant 'sufficient to make it the agent's interest to promote universal good;' not necessarily 'proportioned to Desert.'

quately to discuss; as it could not be satisfactorily answered, without a general examination of the criteria of true and false beliefs. If we find that in other departments of our supposed knowledge propositions are commonly taken to be true, which yet seem to rest on no other grounds than that we have a strong disposition to accept them, and that they are indispensable to the systematic coherence of our beliefs; it will be difficult to reject a similarly supported assumption in ethics, without opening the door to universal scepticism. If on the other hand it appears that the edifice of physical science is really constructed of conclusions logically inferred from premises intuitively known; it will be reasonable to demand that our practical judgments should either be based on an equally firm foundation or should abandon all claim to philosophic certainty.

THE END.

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